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Stanced late model

'61 Karmann Ghia
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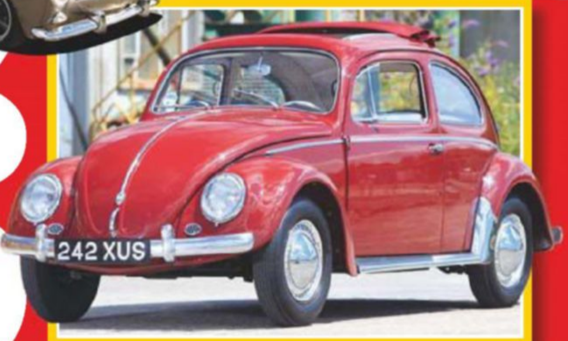

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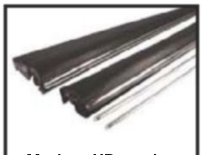

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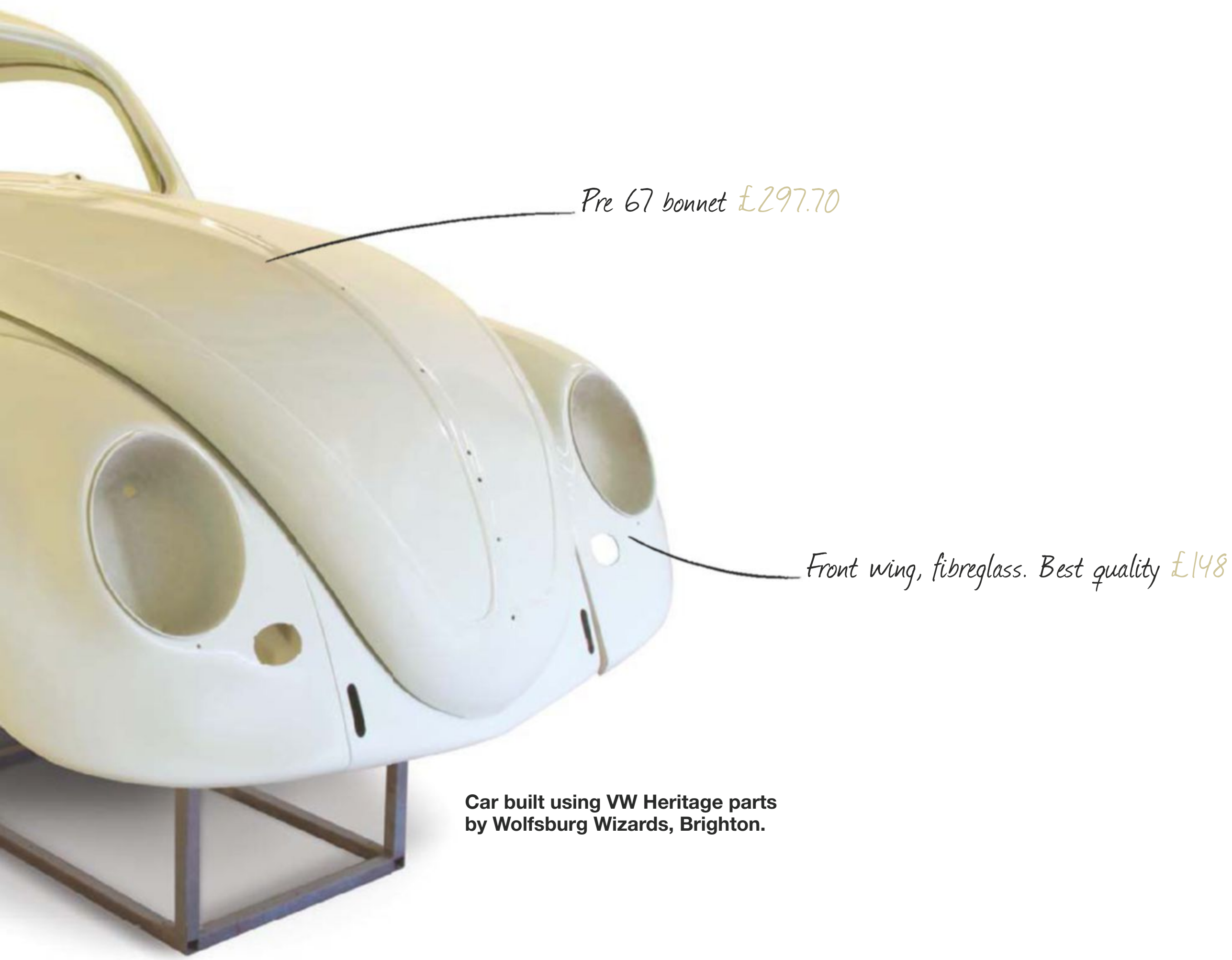
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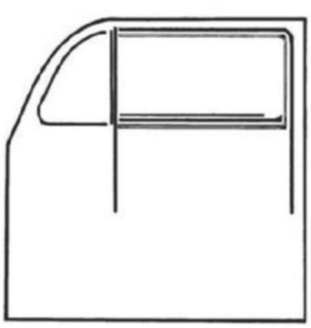

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TES ENGINES

GOLD ENGINE

This engine features everything offered by the 'Silver' engine but with the addition of brand new cylinder heads, making this a nearly new engine.

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These are high-performance alternatives, built to 1641cc. Assembled with the same new components as the 'Silver' engine, but fitted with big bore barrels and pistons, brand new cylinder heads **and** a new 009 distributor. Built to run on unleaded fuel. Exchangeable for 1300 or 1600cc.

BIG BORE PLUS

As above, but built with a brand new crankcase.

DIY PRICE: £1,499

BIG BORE SUPER STREET

Same specification as the 'Big Bore', but fitted with a fast road camshaft.

DIY PRICE: £1,149

BIG BORE SUPER STREET PLUS

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BIG BORE TRANSPORTER 2400cc

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DIY PRICE: £2,199

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DIY PRICE: £1,399

BIG BORE WATER-COOLED TRANSPORTER

In exchange for 1900cc. As 1·9 (left) but with 2000cc pistons and liners, and new heads. ***DIY: £1,799***

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DIY PRICE: £1,899

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VolksWorld

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WELCOME TO THE MAG

Everyone knows I love a bit of Pat and Tina, so the car that really floats my boat in this issue is at odds with how most people view me – as an editor only interested in filling the mag with rusty old junk in place of real cars – none of which is true. Okay, so there's no getting away from the fact that original paint does it for me, but to my mind the Garnet Red '59 ragtop on p28 is one of the nicest cars we've featured for some time.

As cool as the '59 was when it was gnarly and slammed, I think it's marvellous to see it sympathetically restored back to its full glory. And the key word here is sympathetically.

The coolest car I have ever owned, bar none, was the Ruby Red '63 ragtop I found in the classified ads of this very magazine a good 10 or more years ago. It was a two-owner-from-new car with just 43,000 miles on the clock. It had never been welded, but had been painted and treated to a new headliner a further 10 years previous. The original 6V 1200 engine purred like a kitten and the interior had that wonderful old car stink only a Beetle can muster. The only thing I did was fit an adjuster to the front beam and some replica BRMs. Other than that, I couldn't bring myself to do anything that would spoil it. Which is partly why, in the end, I had to let it go.

If you've never driven a cherished survivor VW, you'll have no idea just how much better they are than a restored car, no matter how well it's been done. Maybe it's because a bit of their soul can never quite be replicated, and to eradicate that is a crime.

I've never seen YWC 924 again, but I'll always view it as the one that got away. It's not paint or patina that I'm into, it's simply good cars, whatever style they're built in. ■

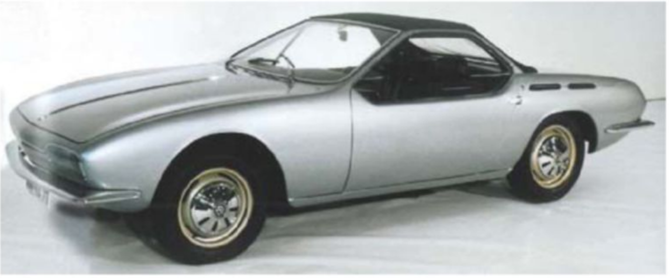
James Peene
Group editor

Three very rare Karmann prototypes to come to 2015 show

We're celebrating the 60th anniversary of the Karmann Ghia in style at this year's VolksWorld Show with three vary rare and interesting cars coming all the way from the Karmann museum in Osnabrück. It will be the first time any of these cars have been seen in the UK and one of the few occasions they have been shown anywhere outside of the museum.

But we cannot claim all the credit, this must go to David Ward, founder of show sponsors VW Heritage who, through his connection with VW Classic Parts, and his obvious persuasive powers, managed to secure the three cars for display at the show. We know he paid a flying visit to the museum, but we're still not sure how he pulled it off, but our very special thanks must go to him for organising such a wonderful display of unusual Karmanns.

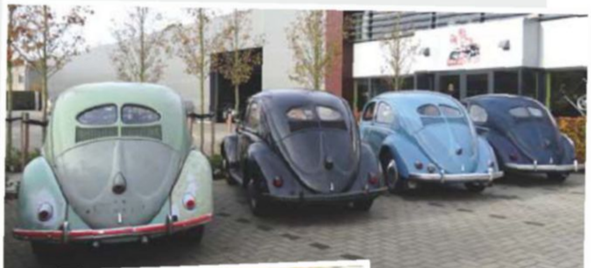
The cars include the pre-production Karmann Ghia prototype – the one without nostrils – that was designed by Luigi Serge at Carrozzeria Ghia and built by Karmann in 1953. Alongside this will be a 1962 convertible design study that never made it into production, and a one-off Type 34 Karmann Ghia Fastback prototype that dates from 1965. This will almost certainly be the only opportunity to see these three cars without making a journey to visit the Karmann museum itself in Germany, so save yourself the time and expense and come along to The VolksWorld Show and experience these unique VWs for yourself.

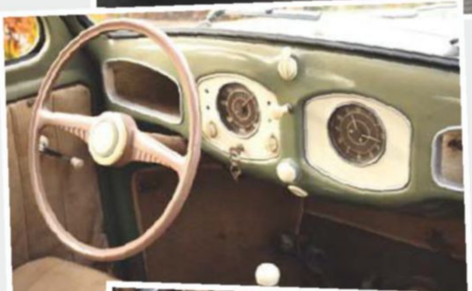


Discovered

It may have taken Bob Van Heyst, owner of BBT in Belgium, since last April to get this deal done, but he finally did it, managing to secure four Split Window Beetles from a heavy hitter collector in Sweden. On a cold day in November, they arrived in Belgium together on a car transporter – not a sight you see every day in 2014 that's for sure! All four cars have been repainted at various times in their lives, but all are complete, running cars. The dark blue one was built in June 1951, the lighter blue car (said to be Gulf Blue, but we're not convinced) dates from August 1951 and has what Bob describes as the nicest unrestored Split interior he's ever seen. It's also the only one still packing a 25-horse motor. The black car dates from January 1951 and is Bob's personal favourite of the four. The least original of all of them is the earliest car, the Pastel Green one, which has a build date of September 1950. This one has only one of its original Split wings and the rear valance has been replaced with a later '60's part, but everything else is there.

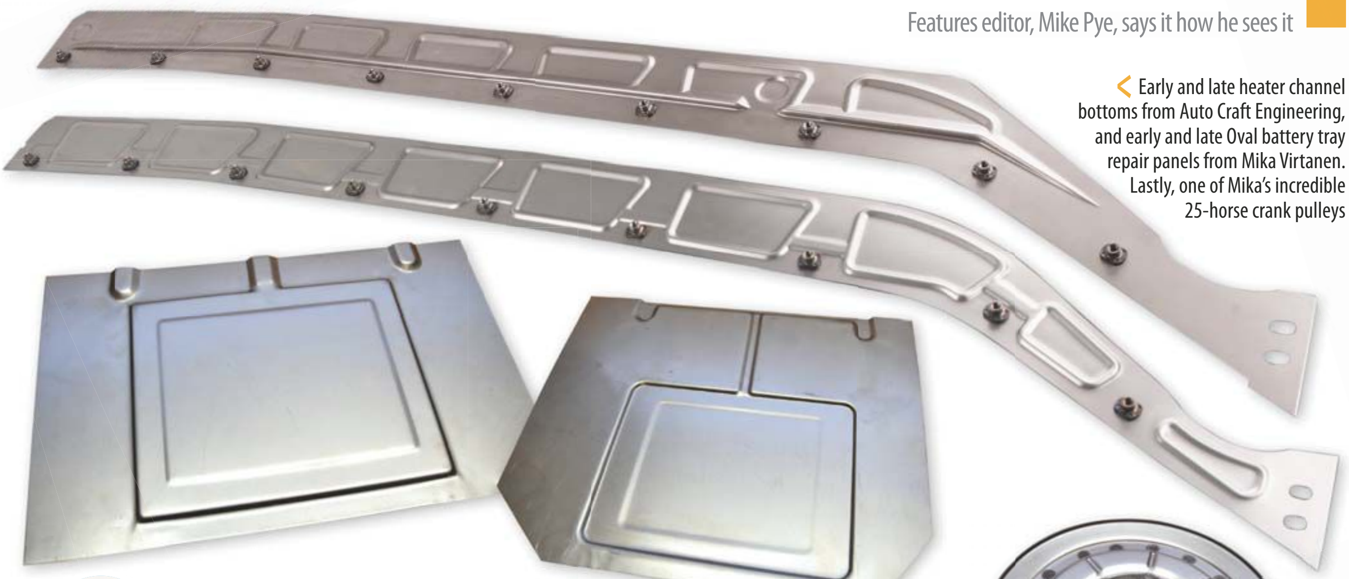
Naturally, all four are for sale so, if you've been promising yourself a Split Beetle, you need to give Bob a call and put your name on one of these beauties.





Like many early Scandinavian VWs, all four of these cars have had exterior repaints at some stage, but check that gorgeous original paint dash

Three of the cars have later 30-horse motors fitted, though some retain original 25-horse ancillaries



Early and late heater channel bottoms from Auto Craft Engineering, and early and late Oval battery tray repair panels from Mika Virtanen. Lastly, one of Mika's incredible 25-horse crank pulleys

Panel perfect

For when only the best will do

Veng. That one word is enough to strike fear into the hearts of any VW enthusiast of a certain vintage. "Er, what year's the car sir?" "1968 / 1958 / 1948 (delete as applicable)." "Yep, this one'll fit." And in 1988, 1998 and maybe even 2008 it might have, albeit with the use of a hammer for a bit of gentle persuasion. But these days VW restorers are a very discernible bunch. No longer will a one-year-fits-all repair panel do. Oh no, and not even 'genuine VW' will do for many people either, for these days that almost universally means genuine VW Mexico. Or Brazil. And we all know that's not the same thing as genuine VW Germany, which is why there is now a thriving trade in decent, used 'cut-out' panels. But into this shark-infested void have stepped some talented people, who take their VWs very seriously indeed.

I think it's fair to say Steve Hook, of Hooky's Panel Shop in Lancashire, was one of the first to realise there was a demand for high quality, short run, repair panels that not only fit, but are made the exact way the parts they are designed to replace were made, not just a rough approximation of. I think it's probably also fair to say that Steve's panels came about through his close working relationship with another fastidious Steve – Steve Gilbert of One on One Restorations. I can still remember looking with awe at the spy photographs that would regularly turn up in the post at *VolksWorld* HQ showing the work that was going into Steve's old Fridolin. Working on a rotten car that no repair panels existed for meant everything had to be made from scratch, and when you're talking complete Fridolin heater channels, for example, that's no mean feat. That was over 15 years ago now, and I maintain there has not been a better Fridolin restoration done anywhere in the world since then. Equal perhaps, but not better.

> "Some of the most exquisite repair panels I have ever seen"

Around the same time, Dorset's Creative Engineering was the first company in the world to start offering complete replacement side panels for Split Screen Buses, not pressed out from some long past its sell-by date tooling, but brand new, laser cut and CNC folded, ensuring they fit where they're supposed to and not where they're not.

A short while later, in 2004, Warwickshire's Auto Craft Engineering started offering a range of superbly made repair sections for Split Buses, initially because the guys behind it were fed up with the poor quality of what little was available for use on their own early Buses, but later to answer the increasing demands of both early and late Bus owners and, latterly, Beetle owners, too.

The Holy Grail

Partly due to the brilliant marketing ploy of painting them 'funky green', everyone and their dog has heard of Colombia's KlassicFab these days, and I've yet to hear a bad word said about any of their year-specific repair panels, which now include what I consider the Holy Grail of repair panels – Oval and Split Window Beetle wings – but now I've got someone else to add to the list. In doing my research for the feature on Phil Davies' '59 ragtop in this issue, I came across the work of Mika Virtanen in Finland. I knew a little of Mika's work, having stumbled across it whilst looking for parts for sale on the internet, and was impressed, but until today I had not discovered his website. Here's a qualified mechanical engineer who has worked in the motor trade as a production development engineer and at Nokia as a design specialist turning his hand to making some of the most exquisite repair panels and replacement parts I have ever seen, from the mundane – flexible brake hose clips and generator shims – to beautifully formed floorpan repair sections and rear crossmembers, not just Oval or Split specific, but individual year specific.

And from what I'm hearing, while these guys may not necessarily make parts to order, if they feel there is reasonable demand, they are willing to consider expanding their product ranges to meet *your* demands.

None of these parts are eyeball approximations of the bits you need, they're exact reproductions, often reverse engineered from original parts, so you can be sure they'll fit as the original VW parts did. Sure, there's a price differential between the mass market and the specialist market, but the fact is both exist. The cheap stuff will always sell to less anal owners who just want to keep their VWs on the road, or those who are working on a tighter budget, but for those for whom only the best will do, there is now an alternative, and it's a growing market that is showing no signs of slowing down.

There may not yet be a market for complete replacement steel bodies, as are now available for so many other popular classics, but I feel a certain swelling pride that all this is happening within our humble little VW world, a world that traditionally has been looked down on by the big money classic car market. And I take my hat off to all the people behind these ventures, and any others doing similar work, for having the balls to turn their hobby into a business and provide VW owners around the world with the sort of quality parts we have been crying out for for as long as we've been working on our own VWs. ■

What do you think?

Do you agree with the ex-ginger Oracle, or do you think he's talking twaddle? Join the debate by emailing us at volksworld@timeinc.com

EVENTS AND CLUBS

Let us know about your VW event or club – email volksworld@timeinc.com

The BB49ers had something for everyone: Bugs, Buses and Ghias, both polished and patina'd

Old Friends Show

A new air-cooled only meet in the west country

Words & Photos Alan Cooper

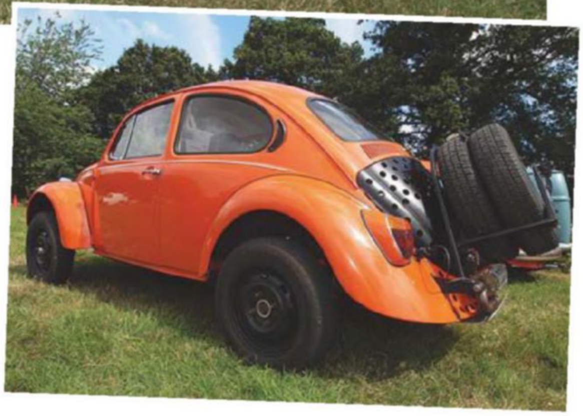
The Old Friends Show was a new addition to the VW calendar for 2014, one of a number of smaller local shows that seem to have been springing up of late. This particular show caught our attention for a couple of reasons, the main one being that it was an air-cooled only event. Held in Yate, just north of Bristol, on a fabulously sunny Sunday in July, it was eagerly anticipated by many in the locally-based facebook VW groups and club forums, and I cruised up with guys from Kerbside Kustoms and Der Blitzen Sphincters in a convoy of what ended up as 12 VWs. The cruise up, with communications between members of the procession being via CB radio to ensure we all arrived together, and then arriving at the show with nothing but air-cooled there had a real old school feel about it, and had many of us reminiscing about how things used to be in the 'good old days'.

All the profits from the day were donated to Macmillan Cancer Support, and the organiser finally totted up a total of £1,611 raised. Speaking of the organiser, the event was all put together by Kirky Nicholls, a 16-year-old lad from Bristol who is very much into the scene, and already working hard to get his first Bug completed for when he is legal to take a test and drive next year!

> “All put together by Kirky Nicholls, a 16-year-old lad from Bristol”

Everyone I spoke to there really enjoyed the day, commenting that it felt like the shows we used to go to in the '90s, with a nice relaxed feel about the whole day, and how nice it was to see just the older end of the scene at a show.

With a separate area designated in the car park for the water-cooled crowd, they were all still made to feel welcome, and this is definitely a show I will put in my diary for next year. ■



^ Brian Andrews' Classic Trials-prepared Beetle. A little different from the norm, but definitely something we like

^ Old school custom Beetle fitted right in with the retro atmosphere of the day

< This slick-looking street Buggy was home built by Ant Adlam, with some seriously fat rubbers all round

EVENTS AND CLUBS

Let us know about your VW event or club – email volksworld@timeinc.com

This air-cooled-only event brought out the Bugs as well as the Buses. Sweet little '71 Beetle was for sale too

'64 Notchback was clean and straight and caught our eye as soon as we walked around the show

Plastic-bodied kit car with Dino pretensions sits astride a Beetle 'pan. It was definitely a talking point

Relaxed vibe made for a laid-back day

Rob Hartnell showed up in his '64 Old School Cal Looker running a 2276cc fuel injected stormer and looked hot to trot

A lowered Oval on BRM replicas, with a cheeky side portion of swan necks thrown in. What's not to like?

EVENT LIST

Aircooled WinterFest
When: January 3rd & 4th
Where: Netherlands, Autotron Rosmalen
Web: www.aircooledwinterfest.nl

DubFreeze
When: February 15th
Where: Bingley Hall, Stafford
Web: www.dubfreeze.co.uk

Spring Dub
When: March 1st
Where: Great Yorkshire Show Ground, Harrogate
Web: www.springdub.co.uk

Freddyfiles
When: March 15th
Where: Ninove, Belguim
Web: www.freddyfiles2015.skynetblogs.be

Dub Aid
When: March 20-22nd
Where: Towcester Racecourse, Northamptonshire
Web: www.dubaid.co.uk

VOLKS WORLD
SHOW 2015
28th-29th March
Sandown Park, Esher, Surrey

The VolksWorld Show
When: March 28-29th
Where: Sandown Park, Esher
Web: www.volksworldshow.com

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PRODUCTS

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WASP exhaust

From: **www.csp-shop.com** **Price:** **€728 (header),€159 (megaphone)**
JPM and CSP have teamed up to create the CSP WASP. This computer-developed design has been in testing for almost two years on the dyno and on the track, and can be mounted on Beetles without any bodywork or tinware modifications. It's available for three different horsepower ratings: Stage 1 for Type 1 engines up to 230bhp, Stage 2 from 220-290bhp and Stage 3 from 270bhp onwards

PORSCHE
KARMANN
Konnection
SOUTHEND
ENGLAND

KK t-shirt

From: **karmannkonnection.com** **Price:** **£10**
To celebrate their recent move to the Golden Lion pub, Karmann Konnection have re-branded, created a new website and these cool new logo tees. They have hoodies, too

Sealey
Sealey

Retro design tool chest

From: **www.sealey.co.uk** **Price:** **£743.88**
With smooth ballbearing slide drawers and lift-latch lever pulls, this retro-styled tool storage system wouldn't look out of place in your house, let alone in your garage. With a four-drawer top chest and a four-drawer roll cabinet, there should be enough storage for any home workshop, all wrapped up in classic styling that's sure to appeal to VW enthusiasts

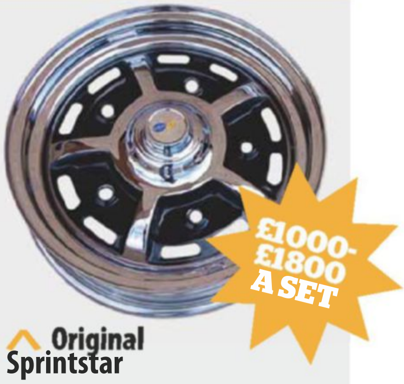
Billet shift linkage

From: **www.limebug.net** **Price:** **£44.75**
Sloppy gears? Difficulty shifting? Then stiffen up your gear linkage permanently with this billet shift linkage from Limebug that comes with a custom-machined sleeve bolt and Nyloc nut

Tiki bamboo shades

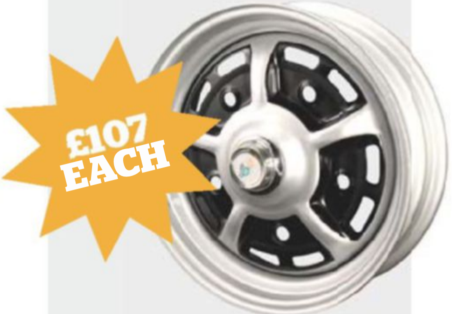
From: **www.rothfink.com** **Price:** **£45.00**
The latest addition to the rapidly growing Rothfink product line are these tiki bamboo sunglasses. They even come in their own laser carved bamboo case

3 Sprintstar rims to suit your budget



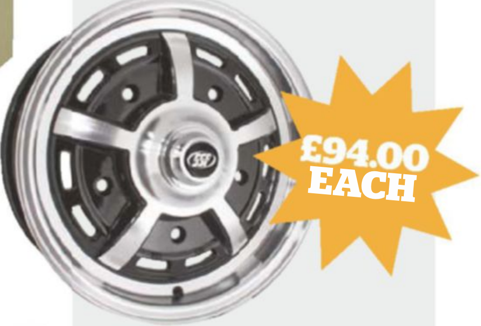
Original Sprintstar

From: **thesamba or swapmeets**
Original Sprintstars are now commanding a high premium, for a set of steel wheels they're big money. 4.5 inch front and a 5.5 or 6 inch rear are the desirable set up and if you can find an original chrome set you've hit the mother load. Prices varey depending on condition, finish and width, generally the skinnier they are, the more expensive they are



BBT Sprintstar

From: **www.coolair.co.uk**
These rims have been stamped out of steel in a 6-step stamping process with excellent details and quality like the 240 hours of salt testing on the soon to be released chrome version. They are available in 4.5"x15" and 5.5"x15" and are the closest thing to the originals.



SSP Sprintstar

From: **www.vwheritage.com**
SSP Sprinstar's are an excellent alternative for those watching their budget. Finished in gloss black with diamond cut ribs they retail at just £94. They come with a 20mm offset and a 2 year warranty on the finish. However being alloy rather than steel and machined rather than stamped, they are not an exact reproduction

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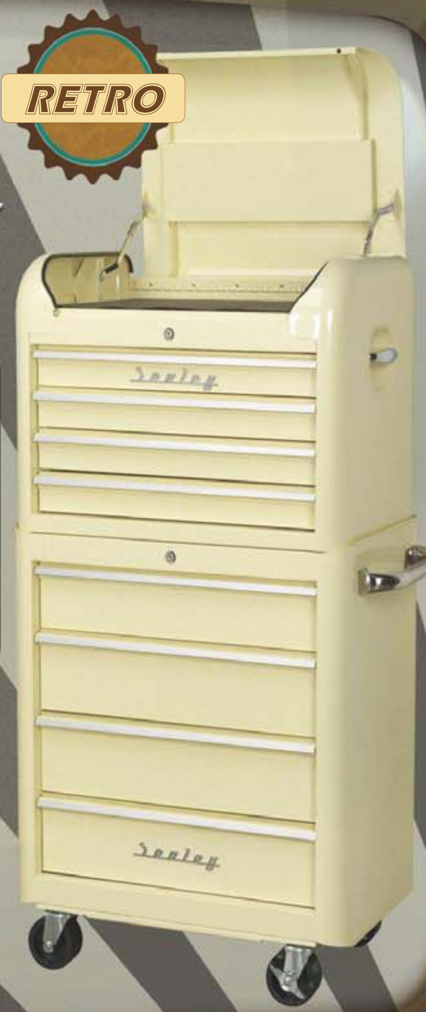

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LETTERS

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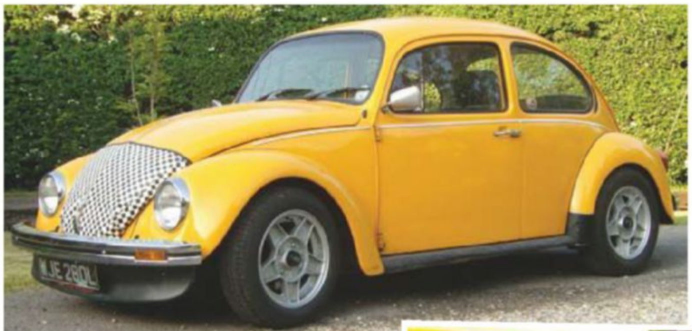
Letter of the month



With its 1776cc engine and ATS Classics, is this the GT Beetle VW should have built?

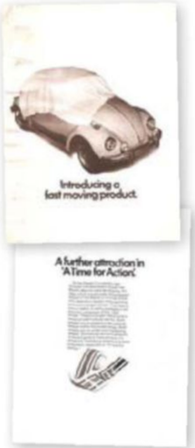
'Vee' Dubbing

Martin, via email

Hello, I found Mike Pye's article on the Beetle with the Formula Vee parts in last months *VolksWorld* interesting as I have been interested in 1970's special edition Beetles for many years.

I have looked through my extensive collection of period VW literature and I am sure the Formula Vee brand wasn't offered in the UK. However, in early 1972 there was a Super Vee dealer promotion available in the UK and I have attached some scans of the brochure that was sent to UK dealers. I have only seen a handful of UK Super Vee Beetles and they were all 1302s painted in either turquoise or Gemini metallic.

I purchased my first Beetle in 1985 and have owned at least one ever since. I currently own a GT and a standard looking '74 1200L fitted with a 2.3-litre Type 4 engine, built transmission, 944 brakes etc. I have attached a few photographs of my well used GT Beetle. It was extensively restored 20 years and 56,000 miles ago, on a new Mexican chassis that was supplied and modified for double jointed rear suspension by Auto Barn. The 1776cc engine was built around the original case and it's still producing 95bhp at the wheels. I was very fortunate to find a pair of Yellow and Black Racer Beetle front seats for it a few years ago. I think it represents the GT Beetle that VW should have built.



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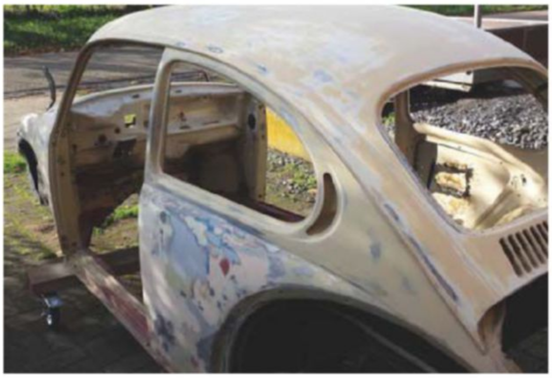
A further attraction in 'A Time for Action'.

Hi Martin, thanks for the informative email. You are absolutely right about the Super Vee and Formula Vee special edition Beetles, and it's great to see an original brochure from the UK version and see how it compares with the US version, so thank you for sending us that. As for your cars, we know our man in Ireland, Cathal, will love the look of your GT, and we're very interested in seeing a bit more of your '74. How about sending us some pics of that as well? – ***MP***

Hanging in Italy

Grant Mackay-Howard, via email

Hi *VolksWorld*, I thought I'd send a photo of this Herbie-inspired Beetle I spotted while on holiday in Italy last summer. It's displayed, suspended off the ground, in a parking area of a vehicle repair business. The car appeared to be in good condition, although the interior has been mostly stripped out leaving just a driver's seat.



To paint or not to paint?

Sven Poelmans, The Netherlands

The story goes about a 1973 VW 1303S. After owning a few and having sold them again because of funding reason, I finally got one I can keep and work on. Even though my budget is extremely low, I have been doing most of the work myself and have so far only spent money on having the floorpan media blasted and powder coated.

It started out as just some welding, but has turned into a full body-off restoration. I am thinking of transforming it into a weekend racer with the German look, so I started sanding down the body, which is welded already (not sure about the quality). While finishing up the first stage of sanding down the primer, I noticed that the car actually isn't as bad as it looks, at least not if you like the patina / faded paint look! My original plan was to paint it bright red with black / carbon accents, but now I am doubting if I should go that way. So, what do you guys think? BTW, this is my first attempt at restoring a car, or even painting, so any advice is welcome.

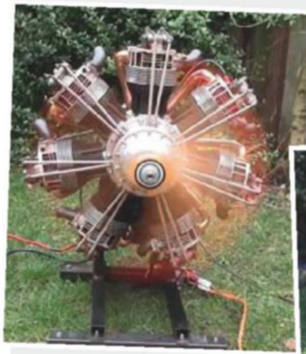
Hi Sven, thanks for taking the time to email in. We're a little confused, but if, as we suspect, you are asking if you should keep your car as it is in the picture above then here is our advice. First, you'll need to seal the metalwork or all your hard work will be in vain. You could lacquer it to keep it like this, either with a gloss (shiny) finish or with some matting agent added for a more natural, satin look but (and it's only another opinion) our honest feeling is it's a shame to have gone this far and not finish the job with a pukka paint job. If so, at the very least you will be wise to spray a barrier coat over what's there now.

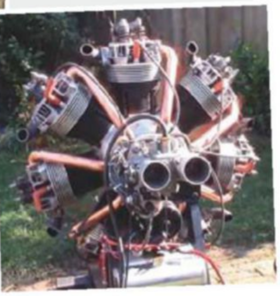
Another option would be to have the car vinyl wrapped, but again you would need to seal the bare metal and porous primer first. It's not beyond the realms of possibility to have a go at painting the car yourself, but speak to some bodyshops and get some advice before you go any further. Please send some pics when it's done, we'd love to see how it ends up. – ***JP***

Radial ga-ga

Ian Gibbs, Dundee

How cool is this? Great mag guys. Once again I will be down from Dundee for the show this year. Keep up the good work.





Arnold de Man's homemade, seven-pot radial engine is amazing, see it in action at www.volksworld.com/radial

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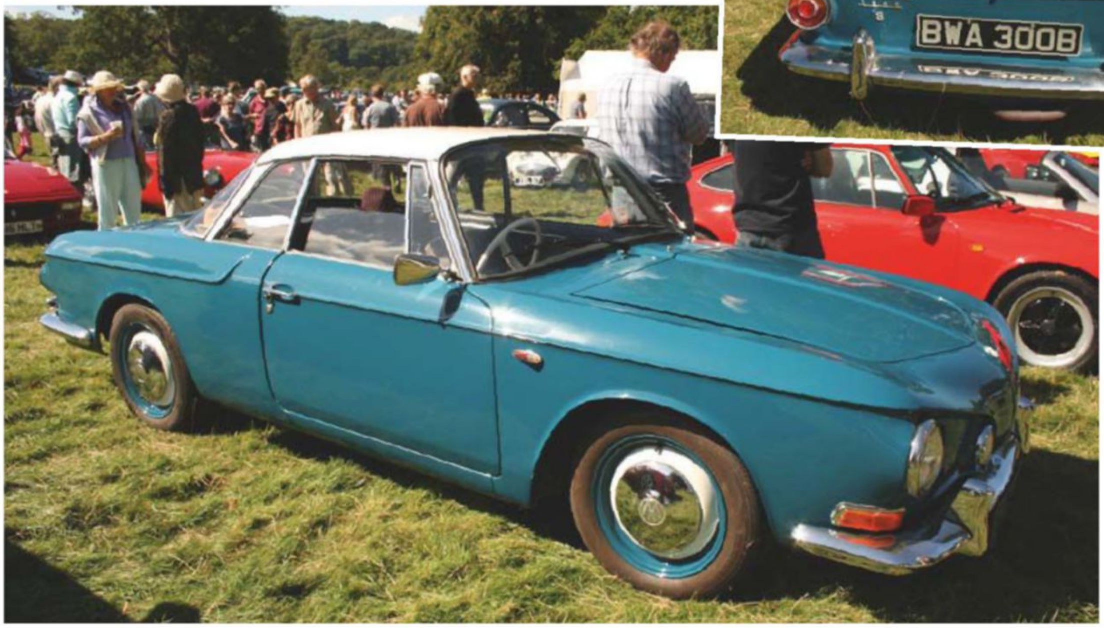
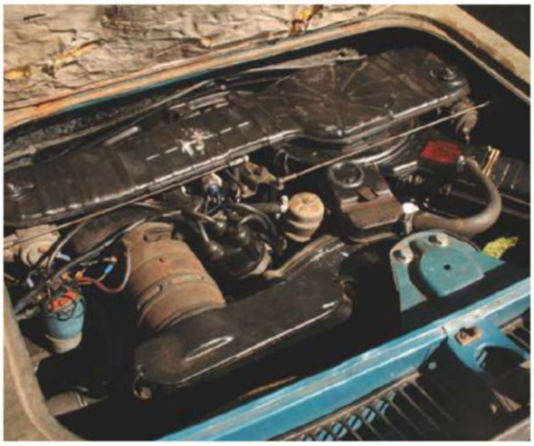
Car of the month

There's nothing quite like the rear deck of a 'big Karmann'



Bodywork restoration was extensive, with Angie's husband and a friend doing the work



1500 twin carb motor is stock, but has been refreshed

Angie Rendell, 1964 Type 34 Ghia

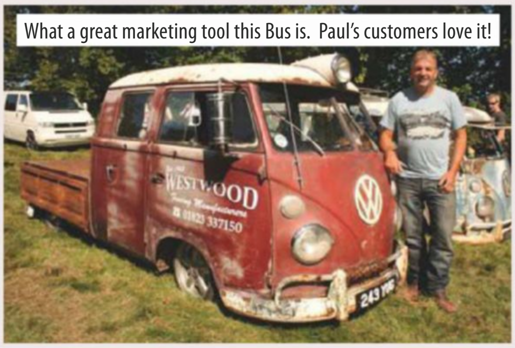
"I came in from work one day, and my husband proudly announced that he thought he had just bought a car on eBay," muses Angie. Its purchase could be deemed a mad moment, but that story is not uncommon nowadays. It seems that quite a few enthusiasts get all excited in the thrill of the chase and end up making a purchase. Around 10 years ago, Angie and her husband went to collect the car from Tottenham, North London It was a rarer right-hand drive example, and its MoT had just run out. The car then sat around for a good many years, prior to being restored, and the work involved was quite extensive.

"The bodywork was completely stripped down and my husband and a friend fabricated new floorpans, as replacements were not available at the time," explains Angie. "Lots of other bodywork repairs were required before the car was repainted in Sea Blue and white. The original engine has been rebuilt and slightly uprated to 1641cc. Other work included fitting a new headlining and a complete brake rebuild." The seats were in fairly good condition and are believed to have been re-trimmed in the 1960s or '70s. Either way, they were deemed good enough to go again.

Since completion, the car has been driven to Hessisch Oldendorf in Germany, just one of its many trips out and about.

> "Its purchase could be deemed a mad moment"

Sea Blue and white is a classic combo, the white roof really suiting the fine lines of a Type 34's roof

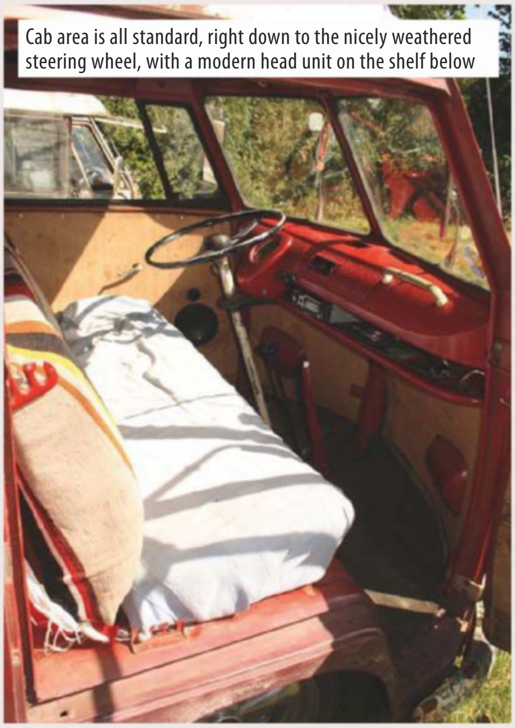


What a great marketing tool this Bus is. Paul's customers love it!

Paul Millard, 1962 Crewcab

Paul Millard's '62 Crewcab is a relatively recent purchase, bought with the idea of being an advertising tool for his business, Westwood Fencing of Bathpool, Somerset. It was established in 1962, the same year as the Bus, so it all just made sense. The heavily patinated look, complete with 'cyclops' headlamp on the roof, stainless steel truck rear view mirrors and tarnished EMPI-style five spokes all blend in extremely well. And, with something as distinctive as a Crewcab, should hopefully pay dividends in getting noticed on Paul's travels.

"We love the highly patinated finish, which we plan to retain," says Paul. "The crewcab was a USA import into the UK around four years ago, and was previously owned by a friend of mine. It runs a standard 1600cc engine and the suspension has been lowered, but hopefully over the winter months of 2014, I'll be looking to upgrade the suspension for better overall handling, and to make it a little more user friendly to drive, either with air ride or hydraulics. It won't be too radical, as I still want to drive it as often as possible, whether it's just popping into town, going down to our yard or out on business."



Cab area is all standard, right down to the nicely weathered steering wheel, with a modern head unit on the shelf below

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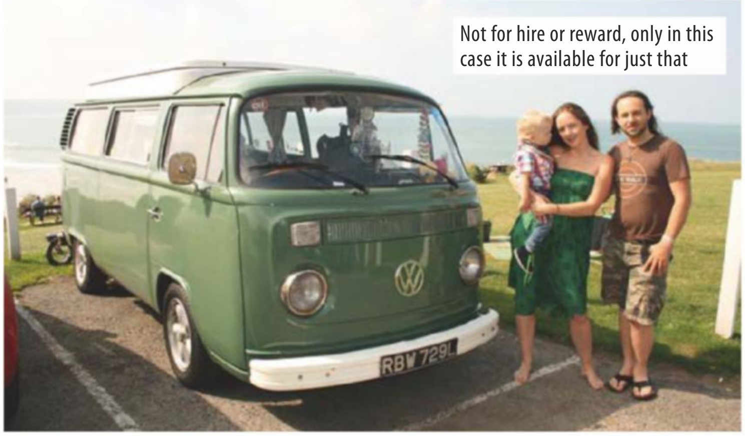


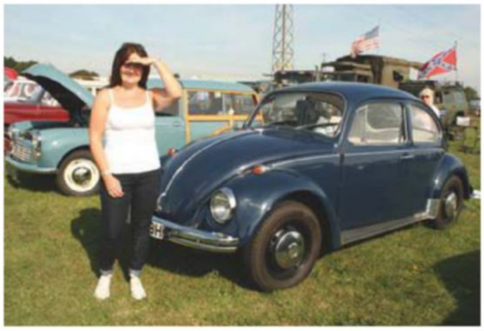
Not for hire or reward, only in this case it is available for just that

Dean Butler and Ali Wood, 1973 Bay

A week before Dean and Ali were due to be married four years ago, up popped their 1973 Bay Window for sale on Gumtree. "We'd always been interested in Campervans and had talked about them, and both of us had pretty much wanted to own one since we were kids," says Dean. "We went to view the Bay and came to a sudden decision, that rather than go to the Maldives on our honeymoon, we'd purchase the Bay instead, as a kind of joint wedding present to each other. It has proved to be the best thing we ever did, and nowadays we use it non-stop during the summer months. We go everywhere in it – shows, holidays and camping weekends away, predominantly around Devon and Cornwall."

Several years ago, when Dean and Ali were one day into a trip to Italy, the engine overheated, almost caught fire and gave up the ghost, so and they had a new 1600cc Vege engine installed.

The Bay, affectionately called 'George', has a homemade interior, installed by a previous owner, but Dean and Ali would like to return it to stock specification in due course. In the meantime, they have started a hire business (faroutcampers.co.uk) and plan to add another Bay to the fleet when funds permit.



Victoria Free, 1969 1300 Beetle

Victoria's father, John Webb, purchased this Beetle brand new from Volkswagen (North London) Ltd. at 259 Plaistow Road, N15 on October 16 1969 for £735. It was their first family car and was used regularly up until 1977, and never sold.

"In February 1989, when I turned 17, my dad asked me if I'd like to use the Beetle. Of course I jumped at the chance," Victoria fondly remembers. "I was lucky enough to drive the Beetle for the next four years, before making the decision to buy my own car. The Beetle then remained at my parents' home until my dad died in 1997. My mum then gave the car to my brother who continued to keep it at my mum's home."

In 2011, Victoria's husband bought the car and gave it to Victoria as a surprise 40th birthday present in February 2012. It needed a little recommissioning work, plus a little refurbishment of the original Cobalt Blue paint, predominantly to the wings.

The Beetle has covered just 57,000 miles from new and is in remarkably original condition. Naturally, Victoria is delighted to have been reunited with her old Beetle, that can truly be described as one family owned from new.

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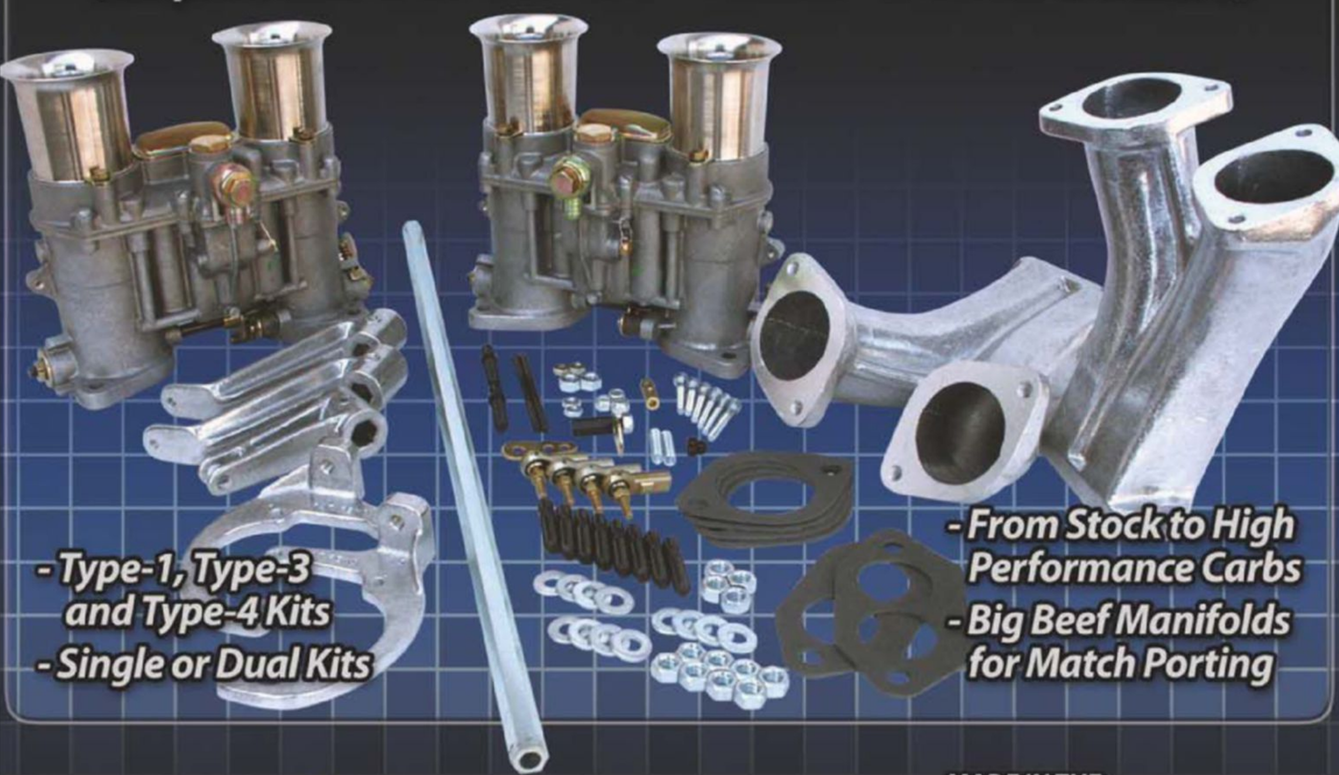

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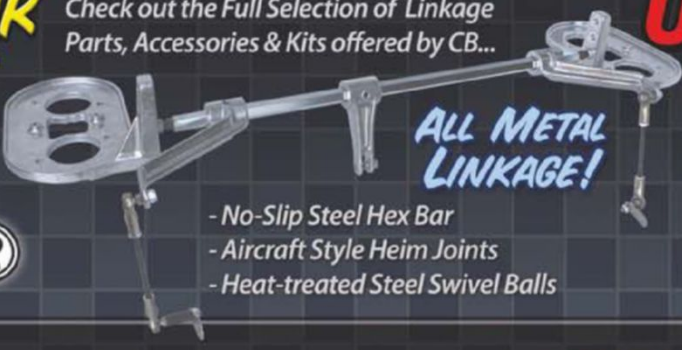

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Words Steve Parsons **Photos** David Hall

In the late 1960s, Disney saw the appeal and fun side to the humble Beetle when they produced the motion picture *The Love Bug*, featuring the anthropomorphic Herbie as its lead 'actor'. He had a fun personality that suited the look of the Beetle that people bought into, and it became a massive hit with adults and children alike. 30-year-old trainee veterinary nurse, Kerri Walker, from Redditch in Worcestershire was one such person. Kerri loved Herbie when she was young and it's those early memories and her love for the people's car that brings the story of this '74 Beetle to these pages.

For as long as she can remember, Kerri wanted a Bug. So, when she eventually began taking driving lessons in 2005 aged 22, there was only one car she was going to buy. That's right, a Mini Metro. Only kidding of course, she bought the car of her dreams – a Miami Blue '77 1200.

At the time she was dating the very skilled and talented Pete Nickson, who was, and still is, heavily involved in the Volkswagen scene. With Pete's help, they transformed the bone stock '77 into a lowered, Golf-seated, 17-inch Subaru Legacy-rimmed learner car for Kerri to get to grips with. For the next two years Kerri lived the VW dream, but that all changed one day whilst browsing the cars for sale section on a well known VW forum. "I was looking for something to replace the '77 when I spotted this '74 on VZi and instantly wanted it."

The love-at-first-sight encounter wasn't, in fact, the first time Kerri had seen the '74, it had once lived just a few miles down the road in one of her fellow RSVP club member's garages. The story of this car begins in 2006 with Colin Pace buying it in Walsall for the pricey sum of £300! "It was too cheap to turn down," Colin remembers, "but it needed a bit of work to make it solid and useable. I bought it with the intention of sorting the bodywork and tweaking the stance a bit." Four new wings were ordered as the original were shot, and some quick welding repairs were made where necessary before a fresh coat of L54D Marina Blue was laid on by Gonzos Autos in Bromsgrove. Once the car was back in Colin's hands, he promptly added the 'Pacey touch' to the '74.

The Pacey touch

If you don't know Colin, or have never seen any of the cars he has owned, one thing you would never see him behind the wheel of is a stock height motor. Every VW he has owned (and we are talking a lot!) has been slammed to the max. So, as was customary at the time, he removed four inches of steel from the centre of the beam and brought the ride height down to a more acceptable level. He next turned his attention the choice of wheels it would be rolling on. Being a 1974 meant his choice was limited to either 4 x 130 PCD rims, or converting it to Porsche pattern 5 x 130 PCD. As this was a budget build and not a keeper, Colin didn't see the point in swapping all of the brakes so the hunt was on for something suitable. After much consideration, Colin set his sights on a set of Marathon wheels because "they were a bit different." It was then used like this for a short period before being part-exchanged with Ross MacDonald for a white '67 Fastback.

Ross drove the '74 daily, but not for long, as he was moving to Scotland and didn't need the hassle of taking it up north, along with all his other belongings, another car and a pregnant wife! So it was sold on to Craig Roberts from Gloucester and, from there, to the eventual seller whom Kerri purchased it from in 2007. Kerri drove the car daily for a few years before it was taken off the road for what was supposed to be some quick-fix repairs…

So what happened in the four years the car was off the road? Well, it was decided there were a few areas that could do with some remedial work and Pete Nickson once again stepped into the breach and promptly separated the body from the 'pan to ensure every inch of metal was in good shape and to give the car a full, fresh rebuild. Working in his ample workshop at the end of his garden, he found the main structure to be in relatively good order, with only one right-hand rear crossmember, both rear body mounts and the right-hand rear bumper mount needing replacement. The bonus was that both heater channels, floorpan halves, rear quarters and lower a-posts didn't require any work at all, which is a rarity on a UK car that has been driven daily. Once Pete was happy the body was going to last another 30+ years, he began the lengthy task of putting it all back together. Being of the mindset that if you are going to do a job, then you do it right first time, Pete replaced every nut and bolt, cleaned and painted every underside surface and detailed the 'pan in some fresh black gloss. With regards to the mechanicals, these too were subject to a thorough going over and replenishment where required. A new Puma adjustable beam was narrowed by four inches, and a pair of dropped spindles, long-travel balljoints and Koni red shocks ensure the car handles as well as possible. At the rear, notched spring plates were relocated a couple of splines higher than stock to help the car hug the asphalt nicely.

TECH INFO

ENGINE Stock refreshed 1600 twin port; dual 40mm Kadrons

WHEELS 4.5 x 15 VolksMag 'Turtlebacks'

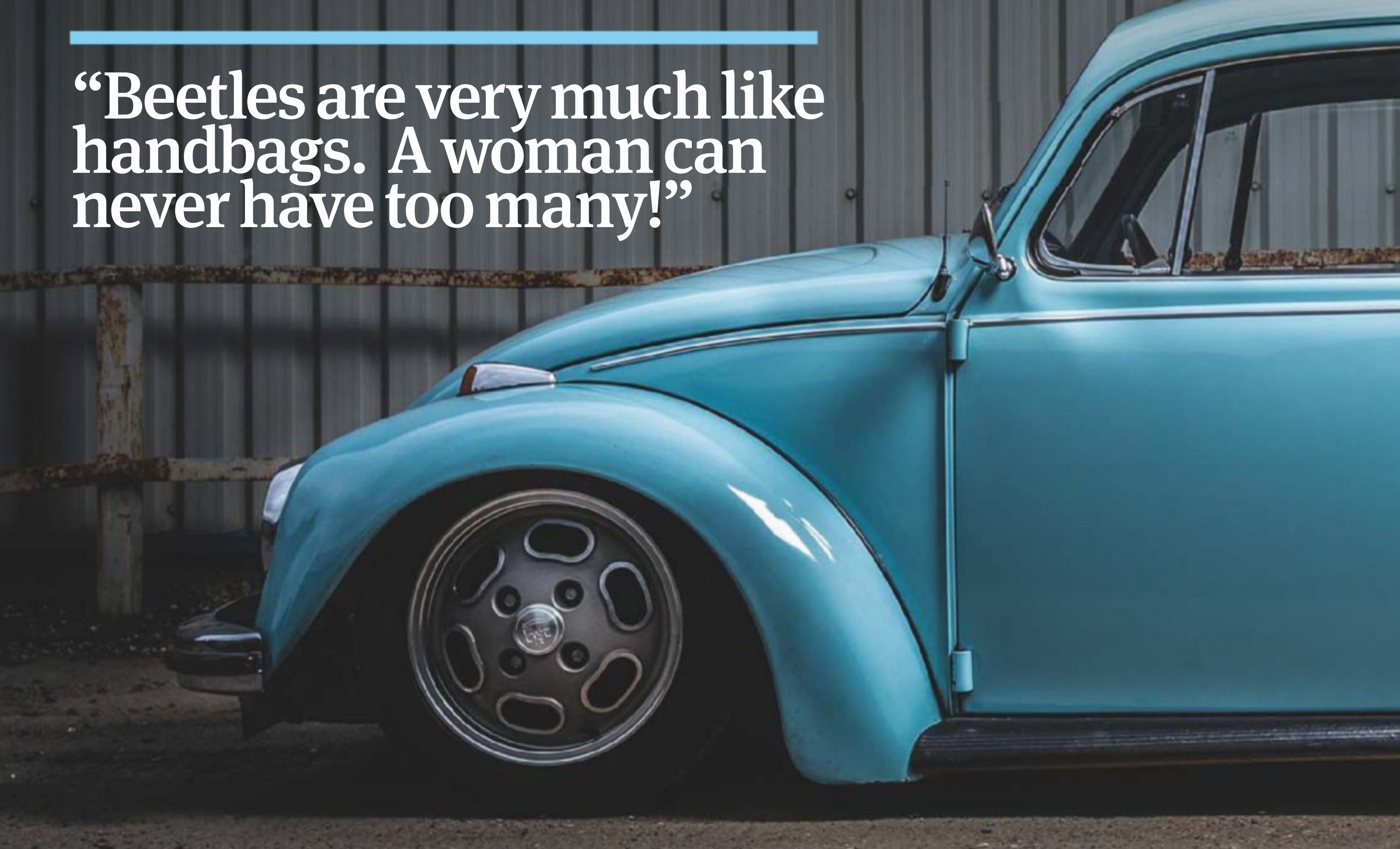
TYRES Toyo 135s and Michelin 165s

INTERIOR Stock

SUSPENSION 4-inch narrowed Puma beam; dropped spindles; notched spring plates; Koni red shocks all round

No lady bags here! This is static, RSVP stylee

"Beetles are very much like handbags. A woman can never have too many!"



Stock and all as it should be for a late 1200 base model, with the only accessory being a parcel shelf

Volksmag Turtleback rims are unusual and a bit Marmite, but custom-machined Wolfsburg crest centre caps are a nice touch

Engine has been upgraded to a 1600 twin-port, and then further still with twin Kadron 40s, and pushes this blue beauty along nicely

"A 4-stud rim with extra oomph

To provide Kerri with many miles of trouble-free motoring, a good secondhand 1600 engine with twin Kadrons was slotted in, and a 1500 gearbox coupled to this so all of those ponies could earn their keep.

Inside, the original basket weave seating, carpets and floor mats were still in amazing shape and just required a clean up before being reinstalled into the freshly reunited body and chassis. With that, the '74 was finished, bar four key elements – the rims…

Extra oomph

One of the most striking elements to this Beetle, and one you can't fail to notice, are the wheels. During the final stages of the restoration, it was decided to ditch the Marathon wheels and go all out to find a different four-stud rim with extra oomph! What Kerri and Pete decided upon was a set of the uncommon VolksMags aka 'Turtlebacks', manufactured by Superior Industries of Van Nuys, California in the early '70s. "This set of 4.5-inch rims were bought from Kinky Mick Tattersall and then sent to Spit and Polish (www.spitandpolish.co.uk) in Kent to transform them. The faces were shot blasted and matt clear powdercoated before the lips and ridges around the cut-outs were polished. The awesome finish articles are shod with 135 and 165 tyres and suit the larger curvature of a late model perfectly," explains Pete, continuing, "We didn't have any centre caps with the rims when we bought them, so we commissioned Good Turning in Redditch to make a set incorporating the Wolfsburg crest. They did a superb job and finish the wheels off a treat."

With all the work completed and a fresh MoT in the bag, Kerri's Bug finally made its first proper outing in four years to the 2013 DTA end-of-season BBQ. Shortly after, Ross MacDonald comes back into the picture. He always regretted selling the '74 and recalls how his two-year-old son "cried for weeks after the car had gone." He'd kept in touch with Kerri and Pete and often enquired about buying it back, but seeing it on display in the March sunlight on the red brick area at the 2014 *VolksWorld* Show made him even more determined to own it once again. Unfortunately for him, Kerri had no intention of selling it at that point, but that all changed when she saw a gnarly, original paint, RHD '65 Sea Blue Beetle for sale. A quick 'call was then put in to Ross and the '74 was soon off to a new home in Scotland. Needless to say, he (and his son) are very happy.

After all these years of owning just the one car, Kerri has recently gone on to buy yet another UK Beetle, this time a Coral Red '58 and, to keep in with the story just told, she bought it from Colin Pace. So it appears that Beetles are very much like handbags, a woman can never have too many! ■

^ Late bugs may not be considered desirable by some, but when they look this good, who wouldn't want one?

˅ "Your axles are broke mate"

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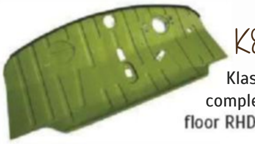

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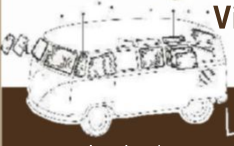

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Don't miss…

Quality hi-top from The Netherlands

Every year we receive show car applications from all round Europe, but Eric's hi-top looks like it is going to be something very special indeed. With a 2.4-litre Porsche 914 engine and a 3-inch narrowed Dogback beam, it is sure to be one of the stars of the show next March. If you are building an air-cooled VW, or have one you think makes the grade as a top show car, send pictures and a brief specification in the first instance to adrian.vaughan@timeinc.com

60 years of the Karmann Ghia

2015 is the 60th anniversary of the Karmann Ghia, and we wanted to celebrate with a special display of cars to illustrate the evolution of this iconic sports coupé.

We are pleased to announce that the guys at VW Heritage, the world class VW parts supplier, manufacturer and show sponsor, will be leveraging their connection with VW Classic Parts to bring over some amazing cars from the Karmann museum in Osnabrück. The cars include the 1953 Karmann Ghia Type 1 prototype designed by Luigi Serge at Carrozzeria Ghia, still with its original leather interior, and a 1962 Karmann Ghia design study. Also on show will be a 1965 Type 34 Razor Edge fastback prototype. This one never made it into production, but come along to The *VolksWorld* Show and vote yes or no if you think it should have.

VW Heritage founder, David Ward: "Thanks to our relationship with VW Classic, we have access to these amazing cars from the museum. To get them here in the UK for the first time ever will make the 60th birthday of the Karmann Ghia so memorable for the UK scene."

Book your camping spot now before we sell out

We have had a massive pre-Christmas rush on camping tickets for The *VolksWorld* Show and are starting to run short of places. Make it one of your New Year resolutions to book your camping tickets for the show and avoid disappointment. To make your camping as comfortable as possible we have lots of toilets, hot showers with power points for hair dryers and for charging mobile 'phones. A family bar will be serving hot and cold food all weekend and laying on some music for your entertainment on the Saturday night. Arrive from 13.00 on Friday and stay all weekend for just £27* for the whole tribe.

*Show entry tickets need to be purchased separately when buying a camping ticket.

International swapmeet

One on the highlights of The *VolksWorld* Show is the Karmann Konnection swapmeet. Situated on the first floor you will find over 100 private individuals selling hard-to-find parts, lots at bargain prices. If you are restoring a classic VW, put a 'must-attend' note in your diary. If you are a private individual interested in booking a swapmeet table, call Andy at Karmann Konnection on 01702 340613. Sorry, no trade.

Clubs from all round Europe

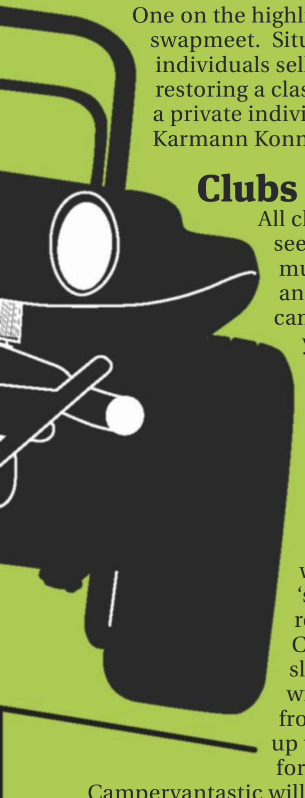
All club display areas on site are now fully booked. It is good to see so many facets of the scene represented and special thanks must go to those travelling from mainland Europe. They bring an international flavour to the event that few other shows can match. Several clubs are putting on special displays this year, including the Surrey Air-Cooled Owners' Club, who are celebrating 30 years as a club in 2015. The main club area on the grandstand apron will have live music playing all weekend so make sure you take in the atmosphere and chill with a beer. Clubs attending are now listed on the website, take a look to see if your favourite is coming.

Campervantastic

New for 2015, and for the first time ever, Campervantastic will have not one but two VW Californias on display in their 'showroom' in Surrey Hall. The display will include the most recent edition to the VV factory Campervan range, the VW California Beach, with the option of up to seven seats and sleeping for four or five good friends. The Beach will be displayed with the addition of the ingenious removable tailgate kitchen unit from leading German manufacturer Van Essa. Of course, the line up wouldn't be complete without what has become the benchmark for the modern-day Campervan, the VW California T5.5 GP.

Campervantastic will also be displaying and demonstrating the new 2015 range of Khyam Quick Erect drive-away tents and Areo Tech tents on the Summer Lawn and will be offering exclusive show offers for all orders placed at the show.

Are you a VW California owner? If so, Campervantastic are looking for VW California owners to sign up the VW California show 'n' shine stand. Places are strictly limited, so contact Heather on heather@campervantastic.com now to add your name to the list. Further details about Campervantastic offers and activities at the show can be found on the Campervantastic facebook page, Twitter feed and at www.campervantastic.com



Awesome debut vehicles

The best show cars from the UK and Europe

Check out the prototype Karmann Ghias

Swap 'til you

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Or just hang out and take it all in

Walk the line

There's a fine line between a 'just right' and an over restored VW, but Phil Davies' '59 sunroof treads it perfectly

Words Mike Pye **Photos** Michael Whitestone

"My first VW was a Baja with 345s on the back, 13-inch Skoda wheels on the front and black and flamed..." laughs Phil Davies, the owner of this meticulously, sympathetically restored '59 Beetle. "But the last three or four I've had I've put back to stock." I guess then you could say that Phil has grown up with the UK VW scene and, like the rest of us, learnt a few salutary lessons along the way.

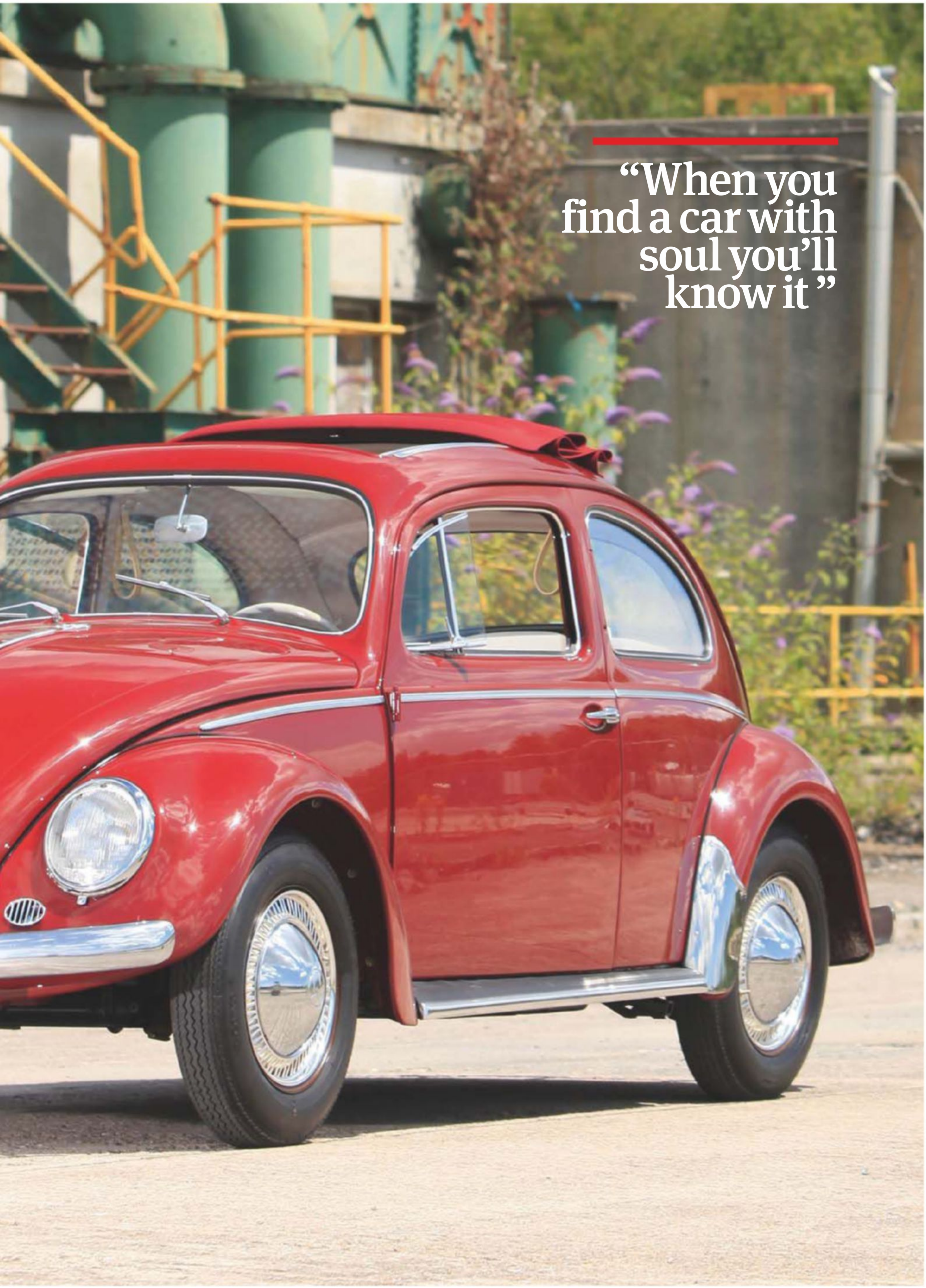
It helps, of course, if your day job is working on VWs, and Phil's is just that, being a permanent fixture in the workshops of Swansea-based FBI VW (fbivw.com). And having a hotline to Sweden, the guys at FBI are well versed in the difference between a good and a bad VW. Phil: "As far as I'm concerned, you're better off with a Swedish car that needs a couple of days of welding work than a 'rust-free' American car that needs all the interior doing. That's where they lose a lot of their soul."

And soul is the one thing you cannot replace in a car. Patina may be the current watchword, but it's become an over-used, and frequently incorrectly used, term. And there's so much faking going on these days it's hard to know what's real patina and what isn't. But you can't fake soul. It's something you can't easily put your finger on, and something cars either have or don't have. When you find a car with soul you'll know it – it's in the way it looks, the way it drives, the smell it has and the way it feels.

All that jazz

This particular car originally came to these shores from Sweden with well known VW importer, Owen Warlow, in 2003. Owen used it as a daily for a while, before selling it to Steve Newey in Birmingham. It was then lowered, fitted with some BBT repro sprint stars, a Flat4 GTV steering wheel and a few other trinkets. As Phil put it, "he'd thrown all the typical jazz at it, so I basically just pulled it all off again." But that's making light of what turned into two year's worth of evenings and weekend work, starting almost immediately after Phil bought the car in October 2012. "I always intended to do the car for myself, and wanted to keep it as original as possible. It had such a great interior, and the full-length sunroof of course, but if it had been a rot box I wouldn't have bought it, however nice the rest was."

Phil knew it needed heater channels when he bought it, but was confident the rot hadn't spread too much further into the car. To make sure, the first thing he did after driving the car from Birmingham



> “When you find a car with soul you’ll know it ”

to Swansea was split the body from the ’pan. The second thing he did was call Gerson at KlassicFab (www.klassicfab.com) and order a pair of correct-for-’59 replacement heater channels. The only other areas that required attention were the very bottoms of the rear quarter panels and the rear crossmembers where they join to the ends of the heater channels, but such is the demand for quality these days, correct repair panels are now available. “I knew Mika [Virtanen] in Finland (www.restorationpanels.com) was doing pre-’55 crossmember repair sections, so I nagged him and nagged him to do some that would suit later cars like mine. I had his prototypes, if you like, and now these parts are available for other people.

In the red

“Once I had all the bits, I spent four days welding and it was done,” says a beaming Phil. Typical of Swedish imports, the car had had an exterior repaint at some time, and not a great one, so Phil wasn’t bothered about retaining that, opting to have just the exterior repainted in the original Garnet Red by a local company. It didn’t all go quite to plan, and he ended up having to have the wings repainted a second time, but we won’t dwell on that.

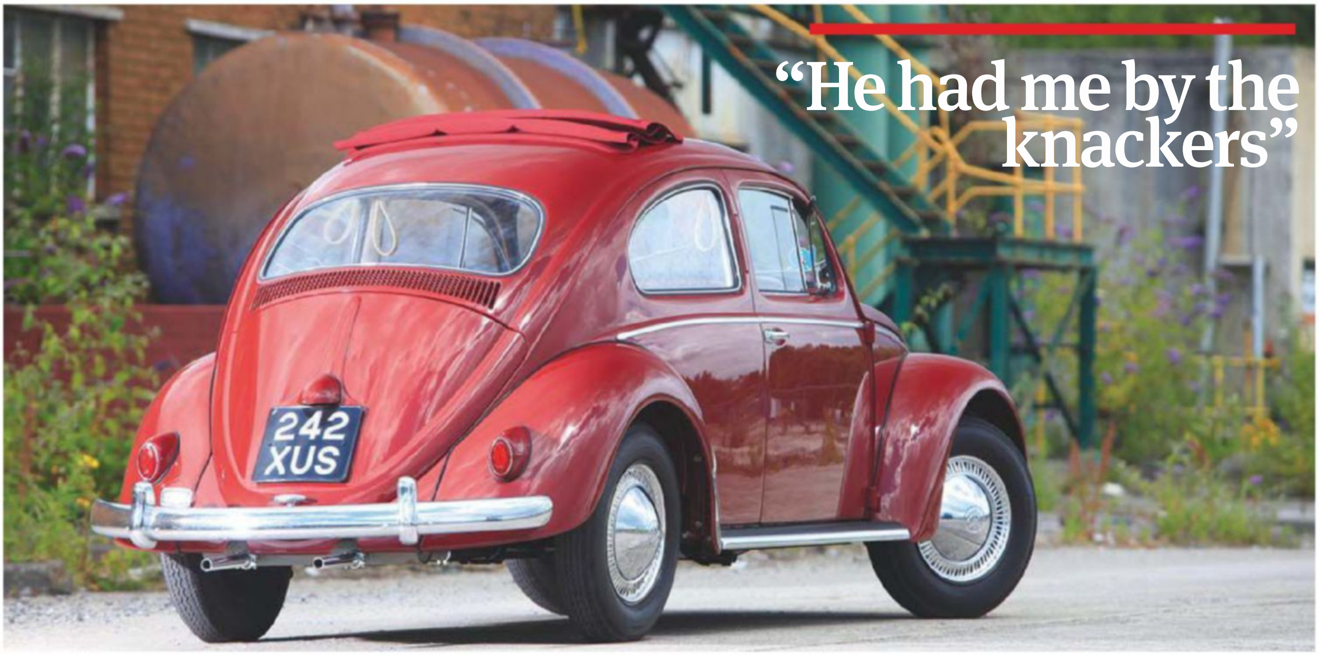
What he was very bothered about retaining was the lovely Export cloth interior. “I tried to keep the interior as original as possible – paint, seat material and initially I even tried to save the headliner. I masked it up when I sent the ’shell to the blasters, but the shot still got in behind it, so reluctantly I had to replace it,” Phil recalls, “but Dave [Tattum] at Spirit Interiors (www.spiritofthe50s.co.uk) did an amazing job of matching the headliner, carpets and ragtop cover to all the original stuff I took out.”

Had any of these parts been re-useable, Phil would undoubtedly have kept them, but they were just that bit too far gone, and the idea wasn’t to end up with a fashionable ‘patina car’, but a properly, sympathetically, restored car, just not one that looks like a ‘new’ car. Hence why the steering wheel has also been filled and repainted. “It was way too cracked, and would have looked out of place in the finished car,” explains Phil.

The seats are a story in their own right. While the Export cloth used by VW often survives remarkably intact, it almost always wears on the top outer corners of the front seat back rests. “It took me over a year, and countless adverts, to find someone with the same interior. Eventually, I found a guy over here who’d brought a similar car in from Sweden years ago and was re-doing the interior on it, so he agreed to swap the front seat back rests with me. I had to pay as well mind, but he had me by the knackers, even though the parts were worthless to him.” To Phil though, they were the ultimate find.

TECH INFO

BODY: 1959 Deluxe sunroof Beetle in L358 Garnet Red
INTERIOR: Stock Export cloth
ENGINE: Replacement 30 horse, stock
WHEELS AND TYRES: Stock steels with Swedish wheel trims and 5.60 x 15 Camac crossplies

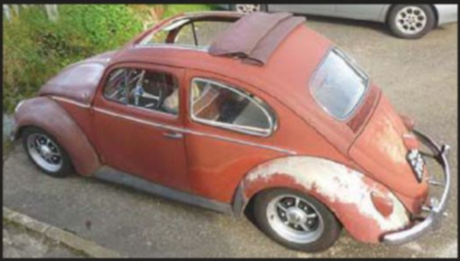


“He had me by the knackers”

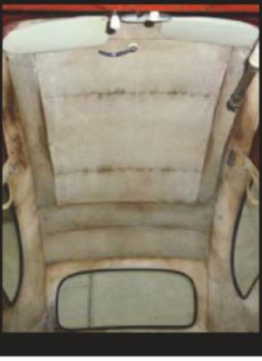
Though the bumpers are what came with the car, the front and rear light units and all the exterior handles are all new old stock units, sourced at some considerable expense through thesamba and pre67vw.com

THE REBUILD

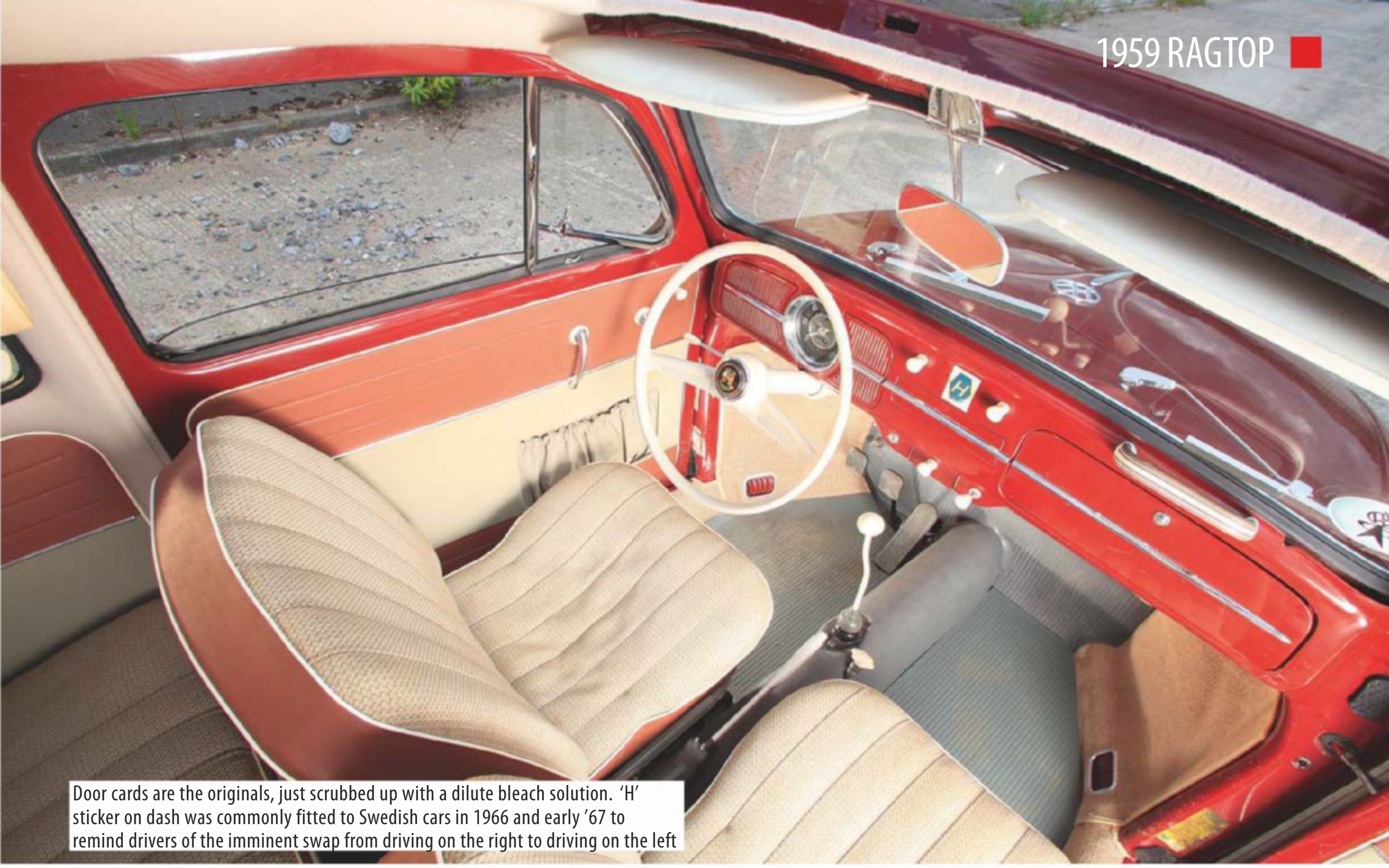
I admire what Phil has done with this car. Having owned my fair share of Swedish imports, I feel he has kept all the best bits (its interior and originality) and re-done all the bad bits (the tired mechanicals and poor blowover) and the end result is a pleasure to drive and, in the right hands, will last another 50 years, far longer than the current patina craze. – MP



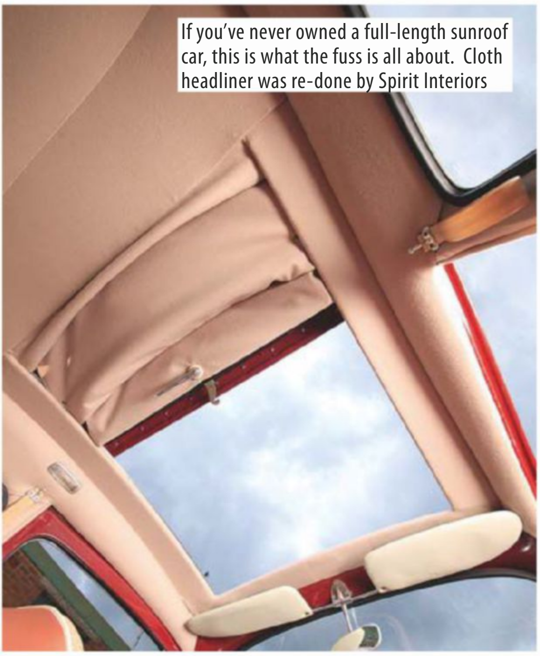
HOW IT WAS
What’s the betting most people that see this will think Phil should have left the car as it was? I don’t



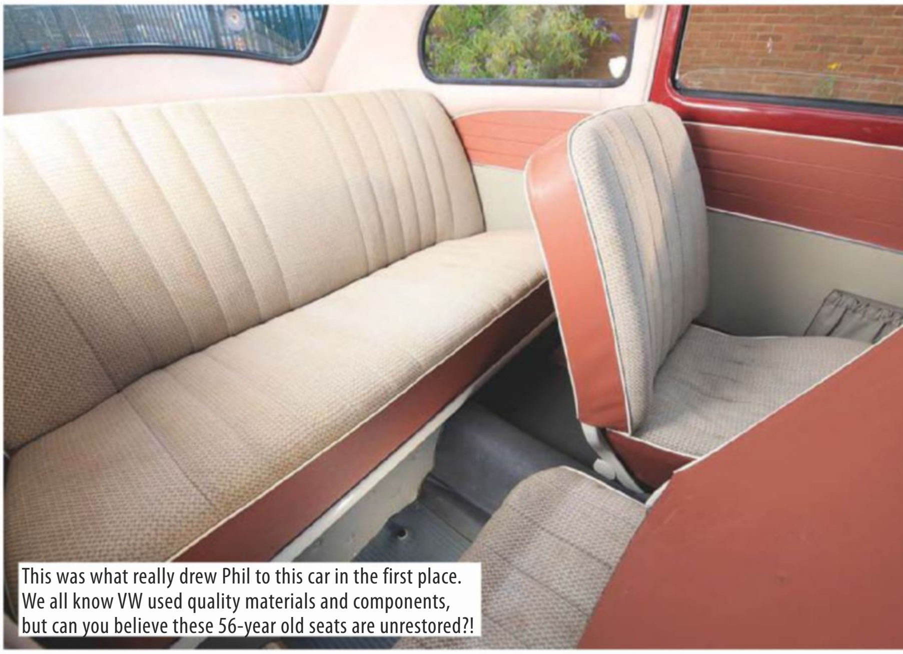
TOO SOILED
This sort of discolouration is common on early cloth headliners, especially on sunroof cars. Phil tried to save this, but it didn’t make it through the blasting process



Door cards are the originals, just scrubbed up with a dilute bleach solution. 'H' sticker on dash was commonly fitted to Swedish cars in 1966 and early '67 to remind drivers of the imminent swap from driving on the right to driving on the left



If you've never owned a full-length sunroof car, this is what the fuss is all about. Cloth headliner was re-done by Spirit Interiors



This was what really drew Phil to this car in the first place. We all know VW used quality materials and components, but can you believe these 56-year old seats are unrestored?!

^ FULL-ON FLOORPAN
The original 'pan was in great condition, just needing new jacking points

< OE DETAIL
No polished bolts or stainless trinkets here, just a nut and bolt rebuild to stock spec. But wait, is that an anti-roll bar we see there?

^ BODY REPAIR
It's brave inverting a body with no heater channels...

The rest of the seats are original to the car, as are the door cards and even the sun visors (Phil actually bought some replacement visors from Wolfsburg West but, when they arrived, he felt they were "too white", so spent a bit more time cleaning up the originals). I guess that's the sort of salutary lesson I referred to at the beginning. Quarter light seals were another case in point. Phil bought the best quality replacements available, took one look at them and set to work cleaning up the originals to re-use. "And they say rubber has a shelf life!" he laughs. "That's another thing that's nice about Swedish cars, the rubber parts are often still soft and supple, whereas on American cars they're always hard and crusty."

When it came to the chassis, Phil was pleased to find it as sound as he thought. The jacking points had been replaced with later ones, so further internet searching turned up a pair of good, used, correct-for-'59 parts, which were duly reinstated. The butchered front beam also had to go. "I built up the entire chassis to stock spec, using an NOS front beam and as many of the original parts as I could as things like repro brake drums – even the good ones – just aren't right." Instead, the original drums were skimmed, while all the consumables were replaced with ATE parts. And yes, it's still single circuit.

Hang the expense

The final piece in the jigsaw was the engine. The car came with a sweet-running 1200 in it, but a '62 vintage one, and Phil had his eye on a 500-mile 30 horse industrial unit his boss at FBI VW, Graham Clarke, had picked up as an NOS unit and had fitted for a short while in his '56 Samba. "Technically, that was probably the most expensive part of the whole project," says Phil with a smile, "but no actual money changed hands. I just gave Graham the wheels and pop outs that came off my car, and the 1200 engine in exchange. All I had to do was strip it and paint the tinware and ancillaries as they were all grey."

With the detailed engine in place, the complete body was then married to the fully built up 'pan, just as they would have done it at the factory. "That was quite an ordeal, and took a whole day, just me on my own and a four-post ramp," recalls Phil.

It doesn't sound like a lot was done for two year's work, but then this was a meticulous restoration, when only the right parts would do. Phil: "Old VWs are like antiques. You don't strip the old varnish and wax off antiques and replace all the screws, you work with what's there. I could have gone to town and had everything new, but it wouldn't be that car any more. There are so many over restored Beetles around these days and, to be honest, they bore me to death.

"In hindsight, maybe I went a bit far, but I'm so glad I didn't paint it inside. The original paint really complements the rest of the interior, and the car still has the smell and feel of an old VW." In other words, this car still has soul. ■

While Phil has gone to great lengths to preserve as much of the original car as possible, he had no qualms about using a set of Day Mouldings wings. "They're superb, they fit better than NOS ones," he says enthusiastically

> "That was quite an ordeal... just me on my own and a four-post ramp"

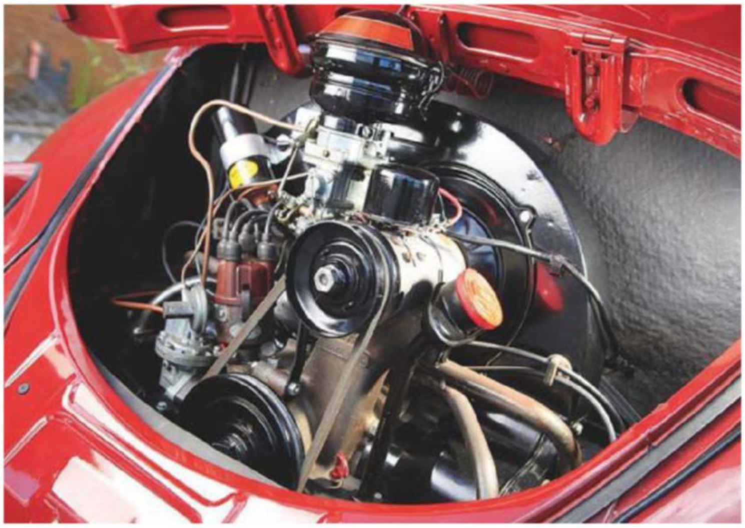
^ WELDING
...but it makes doing the repair work much more pleasurable. All panels used are correct for a '59 car

< MORE WELDING
Where possible, all repair panels were fitted as VW did when assembling the body originally

^ PAINTING
Having the body upside down made painting the underside a doddle

The fuel tank was repainted as close to the original colour as Phil could get, and the jack restored. Card liner is a Wolfsburg West repro

30-horse motor was bought as an NOS industrial unit. All Phil had to do was detail the tinware and ancillaries in black



BEHIND THE WHEEL

"In 24 years of driving old Beetles, this is the best one I've ever had. It's as close as I'm ever going to get to going back to 1959 and driving a new car out of a showroom. It just feels tight. Part of the reason for that is every seal is either Vewib or made in Germany, there's nothing Brazilian on the car. I think that really helps with the final result.

"I've had a '50 as a daily driver, but it was a bastard to drive. I've had Ovals as well, but even they're a compromise, so I thought an early big window would be the perfect car, and with the quarter lights fully open, the windows down and the sunroof open it's almost like you're in a proper convertible.

"I've since found a really nice Swedish '66 though and that's become my daily now, so I'm going to have to let the '59 go. It was a great project to do though, and I love the car."

FULLY ASSEMBLED The floorpan was built up to a complete unit, including engine, before...

THE MARRIAGE ...the almost complete body was lowered down onto it. Nearly there

THANKS

While Phil has done the majority of the work himself, he did ask us to thank a few people, so here goes: Graham (my boss) for letting me use his workshop and tools; Keith Usher at FBI VWs for the welding; Tim Williams for bead blasting; Tudor Morgan for the engineering and machining work and all the guys at APS Alloy Refurb

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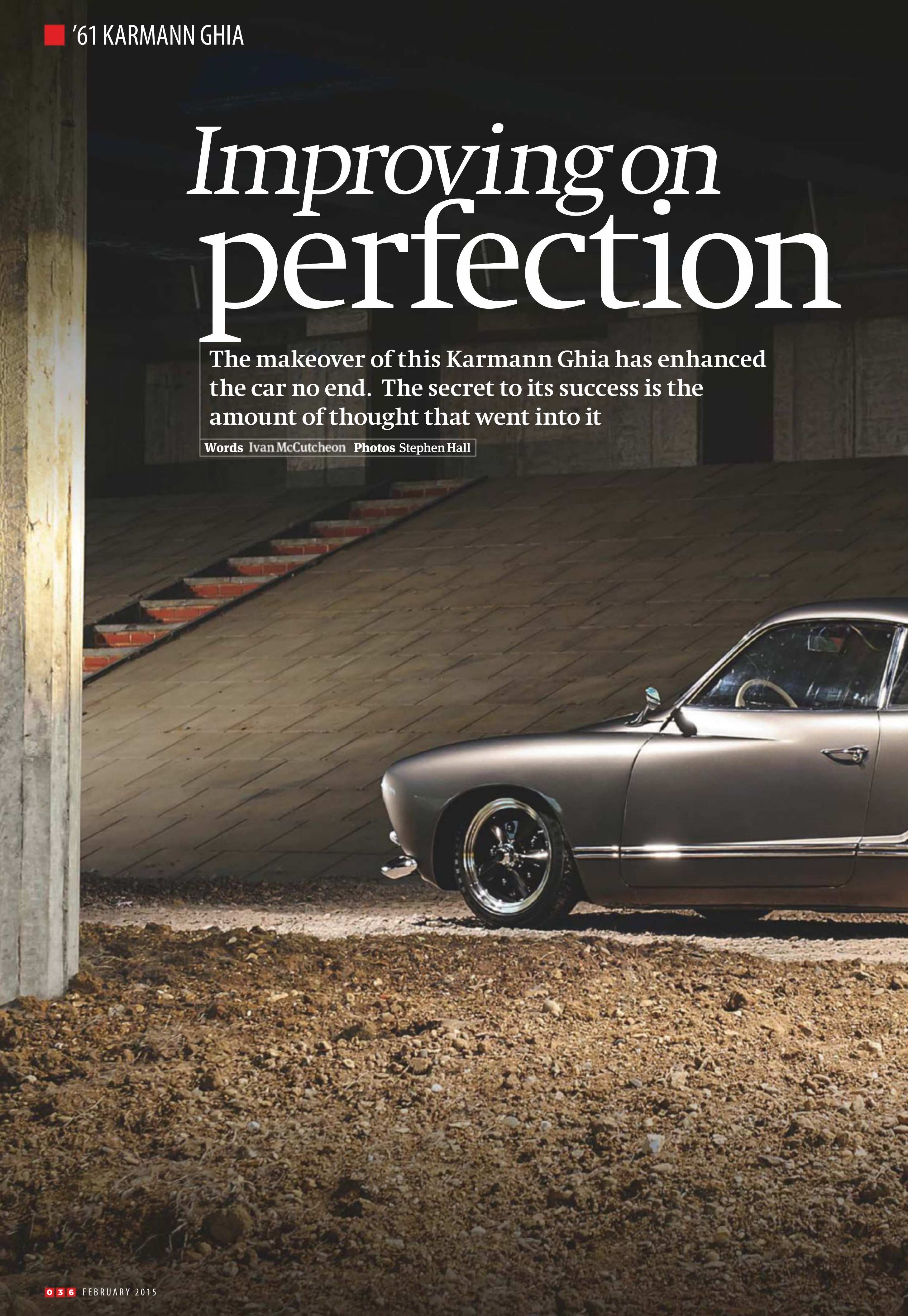
Improving on perfection

The makeover of this Karmann Ghia has enhanced the car no end. The secret to its success is the amount of thought that went into it

Words Ivan McCutcheon **Photos** Stephen Hall



The moment the 34-year-old designer, Luigi Segre, drew his first sketches of the Karmann Ghia it was destined to become a classic. The car oozed style from any angle. When you consider Segre came up with these exquisite lines 61 years ago and they are still complimented, you know he nailed it.

To give you an example of the appeal a Karmann Ghias possess, I'd like to relay a story the owner of this car, David Mutimer, shared. Recently, a chap in a petrol station asked him, "Do you own that car?" David said he did and the guy asked, "What is it, and how old is it?" David told him it was a Karmann Ghia and was 53-years old. The guy replied, "Blimey, that's nearly as old as me. I've never seen one before. It's lovely!" Owning a Ghia, you learn to expect this sort of thing, as the average man on the street hasn't got a clue what they are.

So, now we have ascertained the fact the Karmann Ghia was a great looking car, we need to address how you improve on perfection. To be honest, it's a piece of piss. Please excuse my turn of phrase, but it is. The thing is, it's probably easier to get wrong. When you see one at a show, in a magazine or on the 'net, you know in a nano-second if it's a winner or a binner. From where I am sitting, it's not rocket science. You don't need to mess with the body. De-chroming is pointless. The badges are lovely, as are the bumpers. You may choose Euro spec ones over US towel rails, but both work. The right colour choices, inside and out, are what really matter most, apart from the perfect ride height, the right rims and rubber! The thing is, what seems easy is clearly not, so cut and run to some. [Er, are we the only ones now confused? Is it easy or isn't it?-All.]

Having it large

Chatting with 42-year-old David, you find he's been into VWs since the days of Global Hypercolour t-shirts and mix cassettes. He was having it large at the Santa Pod VW festivals of the early '90s. He rocked a '73 1303 at first, and then a '71 1200, but what he refers to as a 'UK Cal Look Beetle' saw him join the Back to '89 movement. But Damage VW Club seemed more appealing, and this is highlighted by the fact the club is based in the Croydon area and to attend club meets entails a round trip of 90 miles. Shows are still high on his list and he's been a show car judge at some of them. For work, he runs a franchise for Autosmart professional car care products, so he's around cars all day.

Bearing this in mind, it may come as less

>

CALIFORNIA
ESK234

The interior design was David's work, and was made reality by Lisa Hibbard at Stitches Custom Automotive

of a surprise to you than it was to me when he came out with this: "It took a year of thinking and planning before I finally made my mind how I wanted the car. And even then it was only with the help of Spike, Russ and Lisa that I was able to do it." By this, David means the paint colour and interior design and colour. Oh, I'm guessing you're wondering who the hell Spike, Russ and Lisa are? Well, Spike (real name Andy Finch) you may be familiar with through his specialist classic car body and paint business, Spike's Vintage Restorations (www.spikesvintagerestorations.com). The other two we'll come to in a minute. David and Spike used to hang out together in the early 1990s, but had lost contact, until David bumped into him out of the blue at the Battlesbridge VW show in Essex. At the time, the Ghia was burgundy with a light grey and burgundy interior and David had already done a resto on it. As he explains: "In December 2009, I bare metalled the body and, as Ghias were originally lead loaded, I taught myself how to do this. The nearside outer sill and lower front wing section and a few general repairs were needed. All these panels were lead loaded. I had it repainted and it was colour matched to the colour it was when I bought it. I added new rubbers, a Flat4 Banjo steering wheel and a Vintage Speed exhaust. The car stayed this way for about a year before adding some upgrades – a serpentine belt system, Dell'Orto 36DRLAs and an SVDA distributor. Then I bought a set of SSP Crest alloy wheels, only to find it'd been fitted with long axles so they didn't fit. I had to change them back. I also narrowed the front beam by 39mm and added a set of five lug disc brakes."

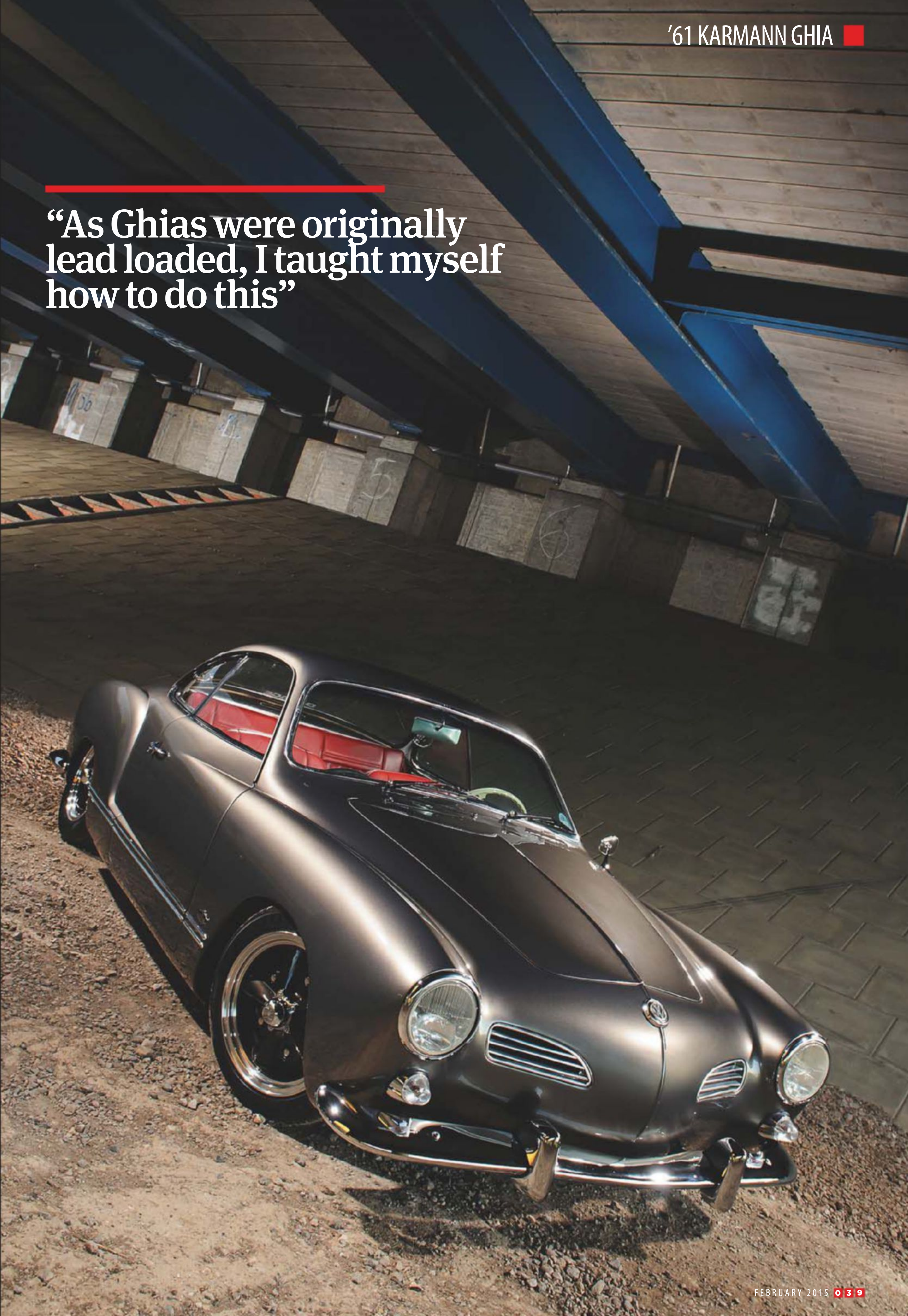
In and out of love

By the time David bumped into Andy in 2012 though, he'd fallen out of love with the car and was thinking about moving it on, or re-doing it. Andy checked the car out and told David he felt the car was, "About 80% there. With a colour change and a few touches, it'd be a really special car." This fired David up and he decided to go for it. After numerous brainstorming sessions, they came up with a list of subtle changes.

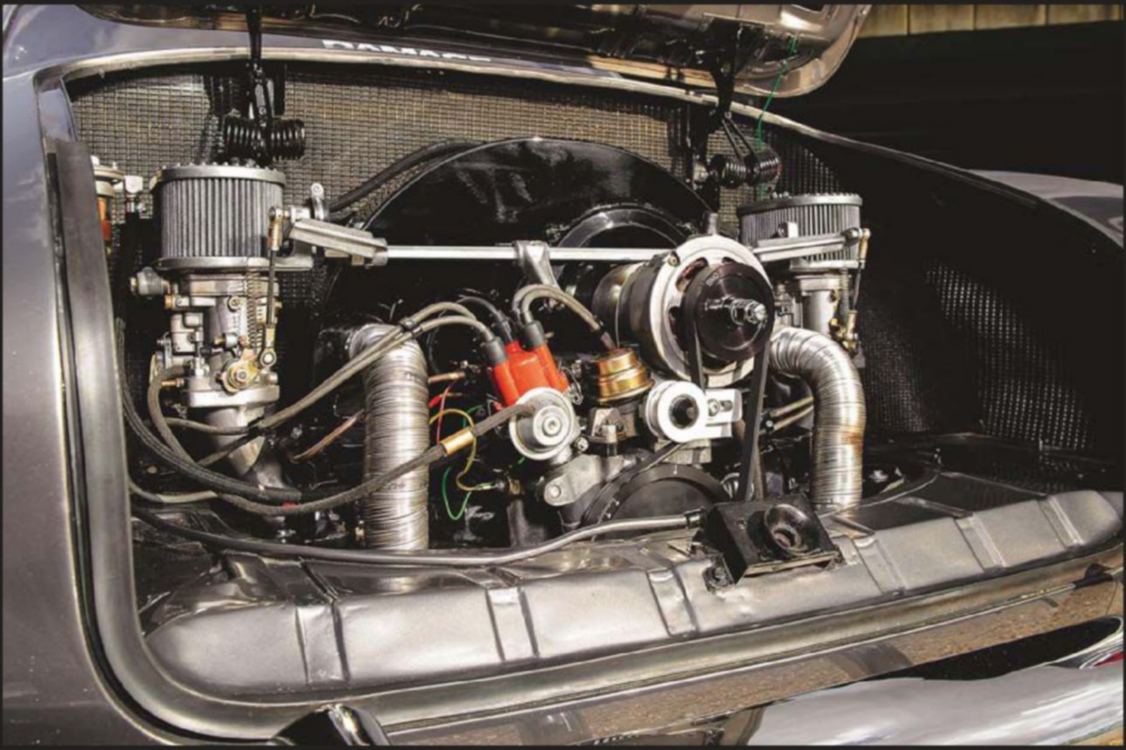
Red seats work with the paint

Flat4 Banjo steering wheel

One-year-only Nissan GT-R Titanium paint changes with the light



“As Ghias were originally lead loaded, I taught myself how to do this”



The 1776cc engine was rebuilt by David and now features twin 36 Dells, CB 044 heads and a serpentine belt system

It took a lot of work to make the under-bonnet area this clean

The vinyl dash top wouldn't be staying, the gauges wouldn't be the same, the brake fluid reservoir would be relocated out of sight and numerous other tricks only an anorak would spot were conjured up to make the end result gel.

David stripped the car to a bare rolling 'shell in his garage ready for his slot at Spike's in November 2013. He sent the chromework off to be re-plated and ordered countless new parts, to the extent his house was "looking like a VW parts shop." David already knew what colour the car was going to be. He'd seen a Nissan GT-R at one of the car companies he provides with Autosmart products. "The minute I saw it, I knew I'd found the colour," he recalls. Titanium Grey was a one-year-only offering. When it came to getting the paint, David had a right result. His good friend, Russell Jacobs, (the Russ referred to earlier) works for Sata spray guns and he got in touch with his contacts at Glasurit, who agreed to sponsor the paint for the project. That sorted, Andy and Russ decided it would be best to paint the car in Glasurit water-based, 90-line paint.

Home and away

While the body was at Spike's being painted, David stripped the engine down to replace the pushrod tubes and do some general service work. While stripping the engine down he found what he thought was a 1600 was actually a 1776, so he decided to change the gearbox for a GT Beetle unit he'd picked up years before for peanuts.

By the time he was done, Andy had painted the car, and repainted the wheels in what he says is a custom-mix colour that works with the body colour, though it looks like black to me! David: "Due to the weather, I didn't get the car back until the second

TECH INFO

BODY 1961 Karmann Ghia 1200, repainted in 2009 Nissan Titanium Grey
SUSPENSION Link pin beam narrowed 39mm
BRAKES 5 x 205 discs front and rear
WHEELS SSP Crest alloys, painted in custom mix metallic grey
TYRES Yokohama 145/65R15 and 175/55R15
ENGINE 1776cc Type 1; twin 36DRLA Dell' Ortos; SVDA distributor; serpetine belt system; Vintage Speed exhaust
INTERIOR Flat4 Banjo steering wheel, Porsche 912 rev counter; Dehne-style fuel gauge

Car's ground-scraping stance is thanks to a narrowed and lowered beam, a couple of turns on the rear splines and a combination of 145/65-15 and 175/55-15 tyres

week of January [2014] and, before the car left, Andy had fitted my new headlining and fitted the front and rear 'screens for me. I had only just dropped my designs for the seats and door cards to Lisa Hibbard (the aforementioned Lisa, in case you hadn't guessed) at Stitches Custom Automotive (www.stitchesupholstery-essex.co.uk.) but she turned the interior around for us in four weeks."

Once home, David started work on the wiring. He replaced all the tired wires and replaced the ends with OE-style terminals. "I hate to see a rat's nest of wires under the bonnet, so I custom made a new loom to run down one side of the inner wings," he told us. Next job was re-fitting the rest of the glass and the brightwork, followed by the switch gear and gauges. "I picked up a Porsche 912 tachometer from a swap meet and had a decal made to replicate an early Ghia tacho. I then relocated the main battery from the engine bay and put it under the passenger side of the rear seat and placed an Optima battery on the driver's side with a split charge system. I used a Vintage Speed Dehne-style fuel gauge and put this in the ashtray aperture."

> "I hate to see a rat's nest of wires under the bonnet"

Sound as a pounding

David has always run pretty substantial stereo systems in his cars, but having a modern unit on display wasn't happening, as he explains: "I dislike stereos under the dash, and the last thing I wanted was an amplifier under the bonnet after I had tidied everything up." These issues were cleared up after a visit to Audiofile Incar in Bishops Stortford, where the main man, Gary, recommended a JL Audio XD amplifier (which is about the size of a couple of Smartphones) and a JL Audio TW3-10 subwoofer. David: "I fitted all this behind the rear seat and I already had a set of component speakers in the front. Gary suggested that I could do away with the head unit and use an iSimple lead coupled with a RCA pre-out controller." David also purchased several sheets of Dynamat and covered the floorpans, rear deck, front and rear inner wings and the whole engine bay, before covering it with stock-style tar boards.

Does it make a difference, you may be wondering? Well, we were too, so asked David. "Yeah. It does work something chronic! Even with the big stereo, there's no rattles or resonance. It's top, a premium product. It makes £100 speakers sounds like £400 speakers. The only noise I can hear now is the urethane gearbox mounts, so I'm going to change them."

David had planned to debut his revamped Ghia at The Freddy Files show in Ninove, Belgium, but it wasn't to be. "I worked every night on the car and most weekends, the equivalent of 10 whole days, but the engine developed a misfire and one of the heads had dropped a valve, so Ninove was out. I ordered a pair of CB Performance 044 heads and, as the car was already booked in for The *VolksWorld* Show, this became its first event. Since then, the car has won a Top 10 at the Apex festival, Top Ghia at VW Action and a Top 10 at The Players Show at North Weald. All of which proves you can improve on perfection.

Thanks: Michelle for her support, Andy and his wife, Donna, Russ at Sata, Gary at Audiofile, Chris Neck, Mark Letts and all the guys and girls at Damage V-Dub Club.

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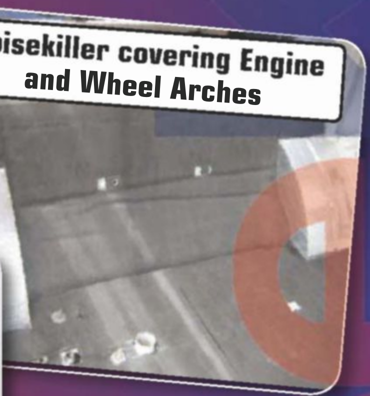
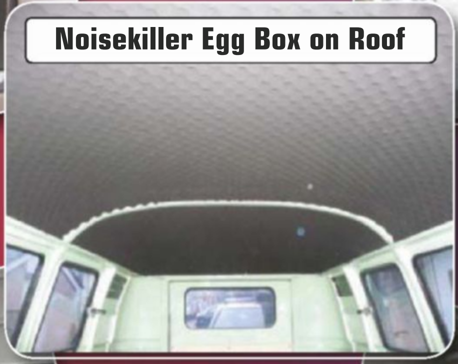


Noisekiller covering Engine and Wheel Arches



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Weekend warriors

Build a car in a weekend? You've got to be joking. Well, we proved it could be done at The *VolksWorld* Show last year by assembling this Meyers Manxter, albeit with a bit of forward planning…

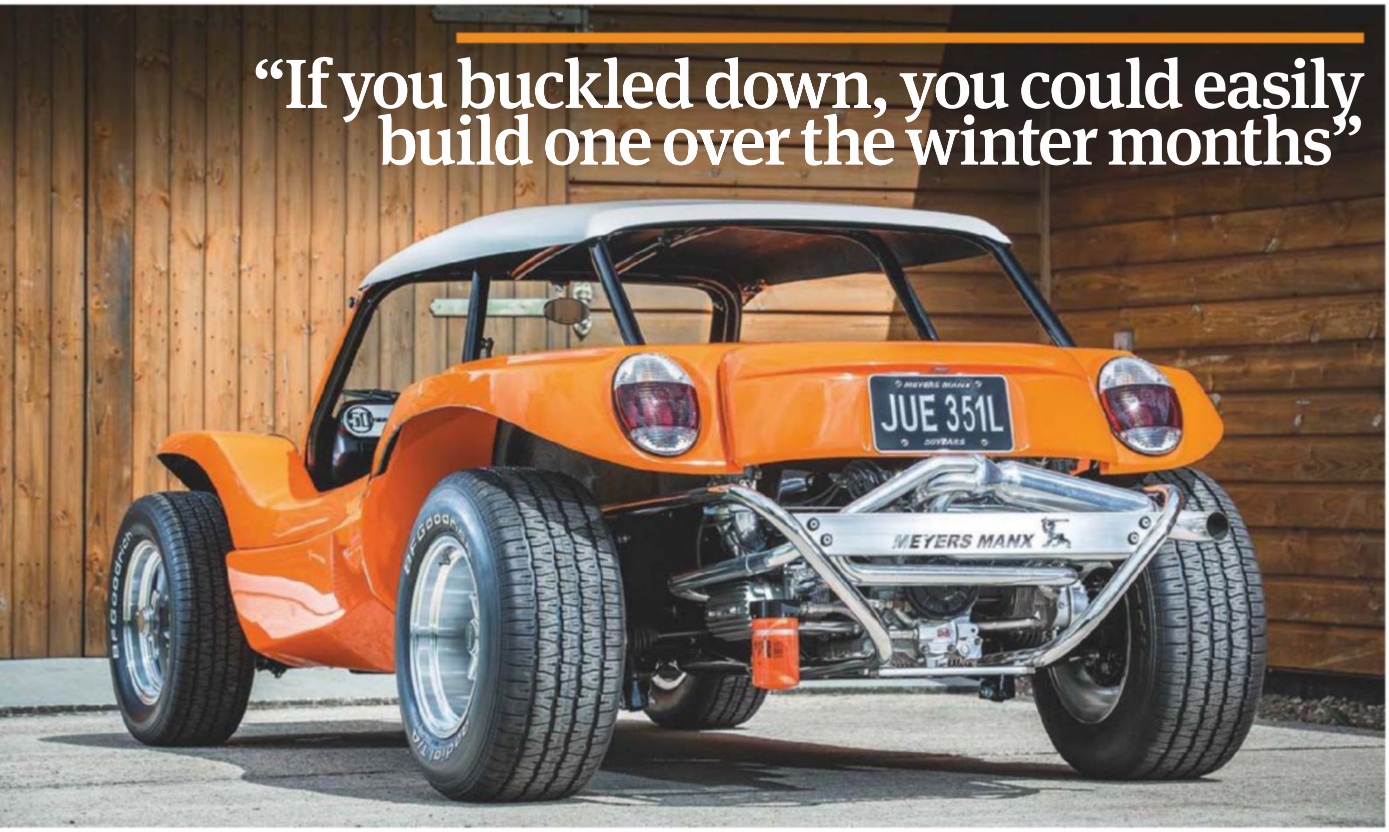
Words Mike Pye **Photos** Dan Pullen

W

Visitors to last year's *VolksWorld* Show will undoubtedly remember the Beach Buggy display downstairs, and the presence of Mr. Beach Buggy himself, Bruce Meyers, but those with more than just a passing interest in these machines will probably have spent some time either watching, or talking to, the guys from Flatlands Engineering that were performing a live Buggy build in the downstairs foyer. As, at the time, it wasn't possible to buy a legitimate Meyers Manx Buggy in the UK, Mark Dryden and his band of merry helpers decided it would be ethically correct to build an authorised Meyers Manxter 2+2 instead.

As well as being part of the 50-year celebration of the Meyers Manx, the point of the demonstration was to give people an opportunity to see first hand what goes into building a Buggy from scratch, and an opportunity to question some of the undisputed experts in the field. When we were finalising the details before the show, one of our main questions was could it be done in a weekend? We'd already had a short-wheelbase Buggy successfully built at the show on a previous occasion, but the long-wheelbase Manxter is a significantly more complex affair.

Radial T/A
BFGoodrich



> "If you buckled down, you could easily build one over the winter months"

One of the few complaints Mark has about the Manxter bodies is the size of the front arches, which he feels could be a touch wider to bring the front wheels more neatly under the body

As with all good TV car building shows, it was going to require a little bit of trickery to pull it off, for not even Mark and his team, with all their experience, can build a Manxter from scratch in a weekend without a bit – make that a lot – of forward planning. Mark: "If you really set your mind to it, I think you probably could build a Manxter in a week, but you certainly couldn't do it if you just had a rusty old donor Beetle and a Manxter kit. More realistically, if you buckled down, you could easily build one over the winter months, though I've got one customer who has been working on his for six years now…"

It'll end in tears

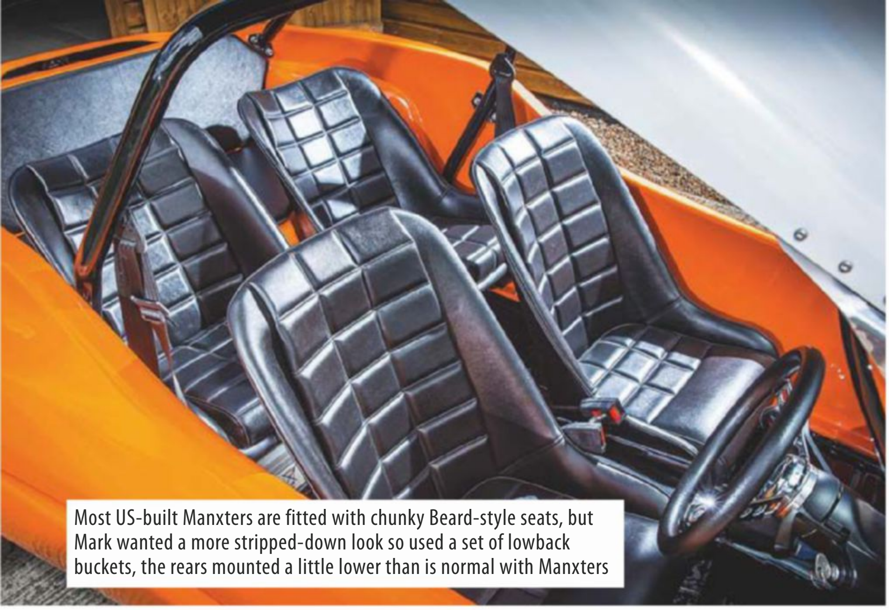
In true Flatlands Engineering style, that forward planning means having all the parts you need cleaned up, rebuilt where necessary, and ready to go before you even open the box on the project. Mark: "These kits are very good, but if you start by painting everything and then try and bolt it to together you'll end up in tears. Because there are so many variations in different year Beetles, and so many bends and curves in the structure to line up, there's always going to be a little bit of fettling necessary, so you really need to dry build the car first, then take it apart for paint and detailing." And that's exactly what the guys did in the weeks leading up to The 2014 *VolksWorld* Show. Give or take a few bolt-on bits, the car was completely dry built so every mounting point could be checked, every hole drilled and every part test fitted so there would be no surprises over the course of the weekend. Only then were parts sent out for painting, polishing and powder coating. Naturally, no rusty or decrepit parts were used in the final build, everything being either new or cleaned, painted and detailed original VW parts, many of which were pre-built sub-assemblies by the time they reached Sandown Park. "To be honest, we don't use a lot from the donor car on the cars we build," explains Mark. "Obviously there's the floorpan, and a few items like the steering column that you can't buy new, but pretty much everything else is new. We won't cut corners on anything mechanical, or safety-related."

TECH INFO

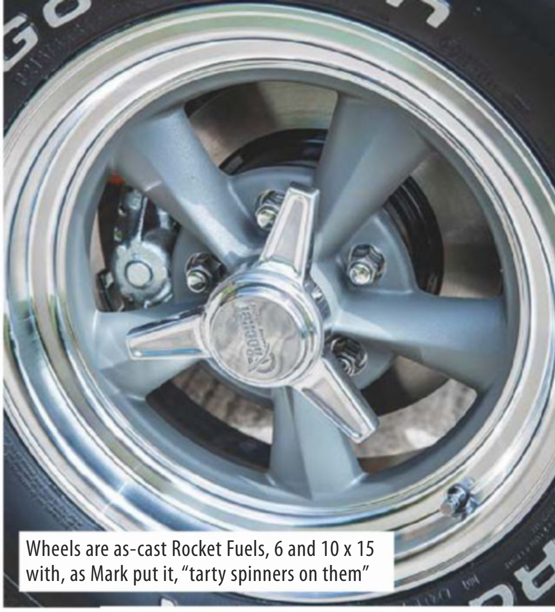
ENGINE: 1914cc Type 1; CB heads; twin 44IDF Webers; Manx Sidewinder exhaust
GEARBOX: Stock VW IRS
SUSPENSION: Stock balljoint front beam with Sway-A-Way adjusters; stock shocks all round
BRAKES: Stock VW discs and drums, all hubs Chevy 4.75 x 5 PCD stud pattern
WHEELS: Rocket Fuel, 6 and 10 x 15
TYRES: BF Goodrich Radial T/A, 215/65 and 275/60

What you may not realise about the Manxter kit, and why we say it is more complex than a standard short-wheelbase kit, is that as well as the opening bonnet, hinged engine panel and four-piece dashboard, it has an integral rollcage structure that sandwiches the body to the floorpan. This both adds rigidity and a hitherto unheard of level of occupant safety for a Beach Buggy, including the option for proper mounting points for inertia reel seat belts front and rear. Being a long wheelbase 2+2 Buggy also means there's no need for chassis shortening, which in a stroke removes a large chunk of cost and engineering work. More importantly, it means there's no requirement for putting the finished Buggy through a BIVA (Basic Individual Vehicle Assessment) test as no modifications have been made to the standard chassis. As such, all you have to do is send off your logbook to the DVLA notifying them of a change of body type. You may well find it comes back with 'Light 4x4 utility vehicle' as that classification seems to be the nearest thing on the DVLA database to a Beach Buggy but, no matter, the important thing is a Beetle-based Manxter registered this way is legitimate and legal to drive on UK roads.

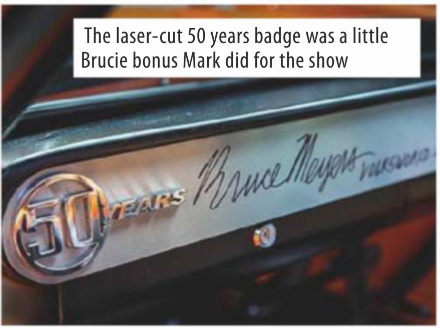
In fact, so comprehensive is the rollcage structure that you could drive a Manxter without the body fitted at all. "In essence, it's a sand rail with a body fitted," explains Mark. "The only modification you need to make is to weld a tab onto the stock VW steering column so it can be bolted to the 'cage structure, and this is a service we offer on an exchange basis. It's not



Most US-built Manxters are fitted with chunky Beard-style seats, but Mark wanted a more stripped-down look so used a set of lowback buckets, the rears mounted a little lower than is normal with Manxters



Wheels are as-cast Rocket Fuels, 6 and 10 x 15 with, as Mark put it, "tarty spinners on them"



The laser-cut 50 years badge was a little Brucie bonus Mark did for the show

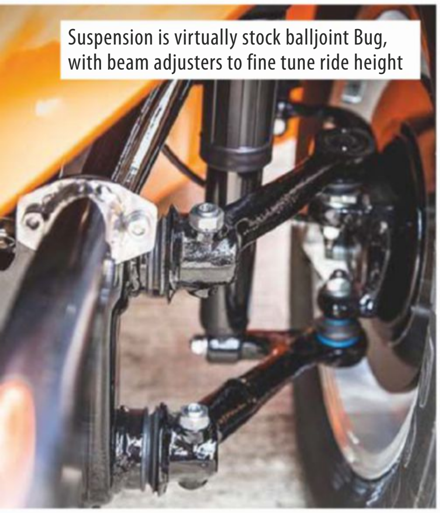
THE 12-HOUR BUILD!

> It's concentration faces all round as the boys get to grips with the mechanical parts of the build. Note the side impact bars are already in place here

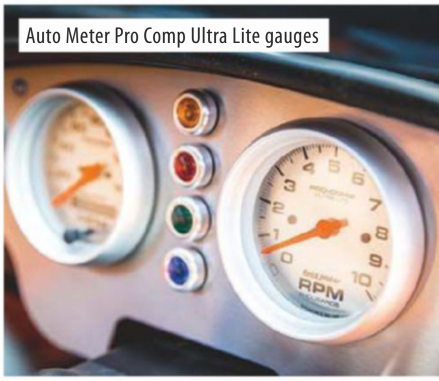
< Once the 'pan is fully built up, the body tub is dropped down over it and the hidden part of the rollcage structure

> Here's Bruce Meyers signing the laser-cut dash panel before fitting, while Mark Dryden (right) watches on

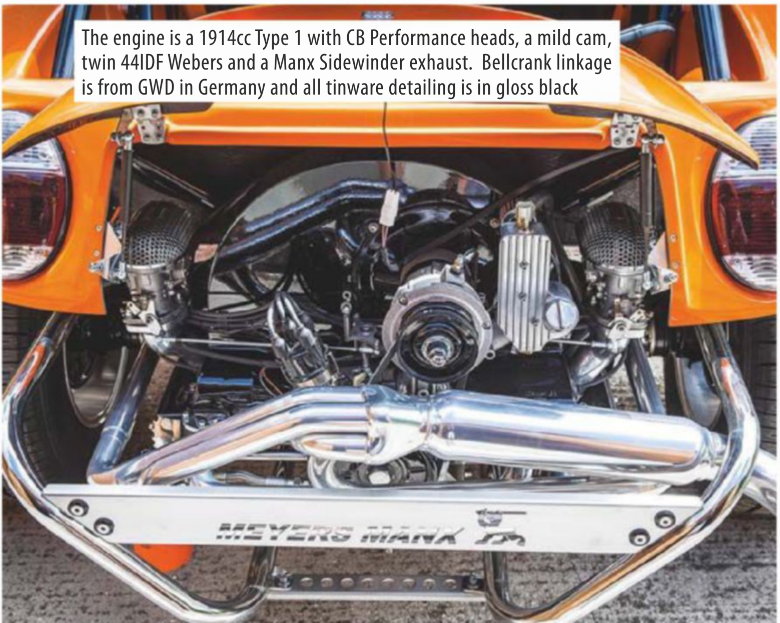
Tilt mechanism is typically Flatlands



Suspension is virtually stock balljoint Bug, with beam adjusters to fine tune ride height

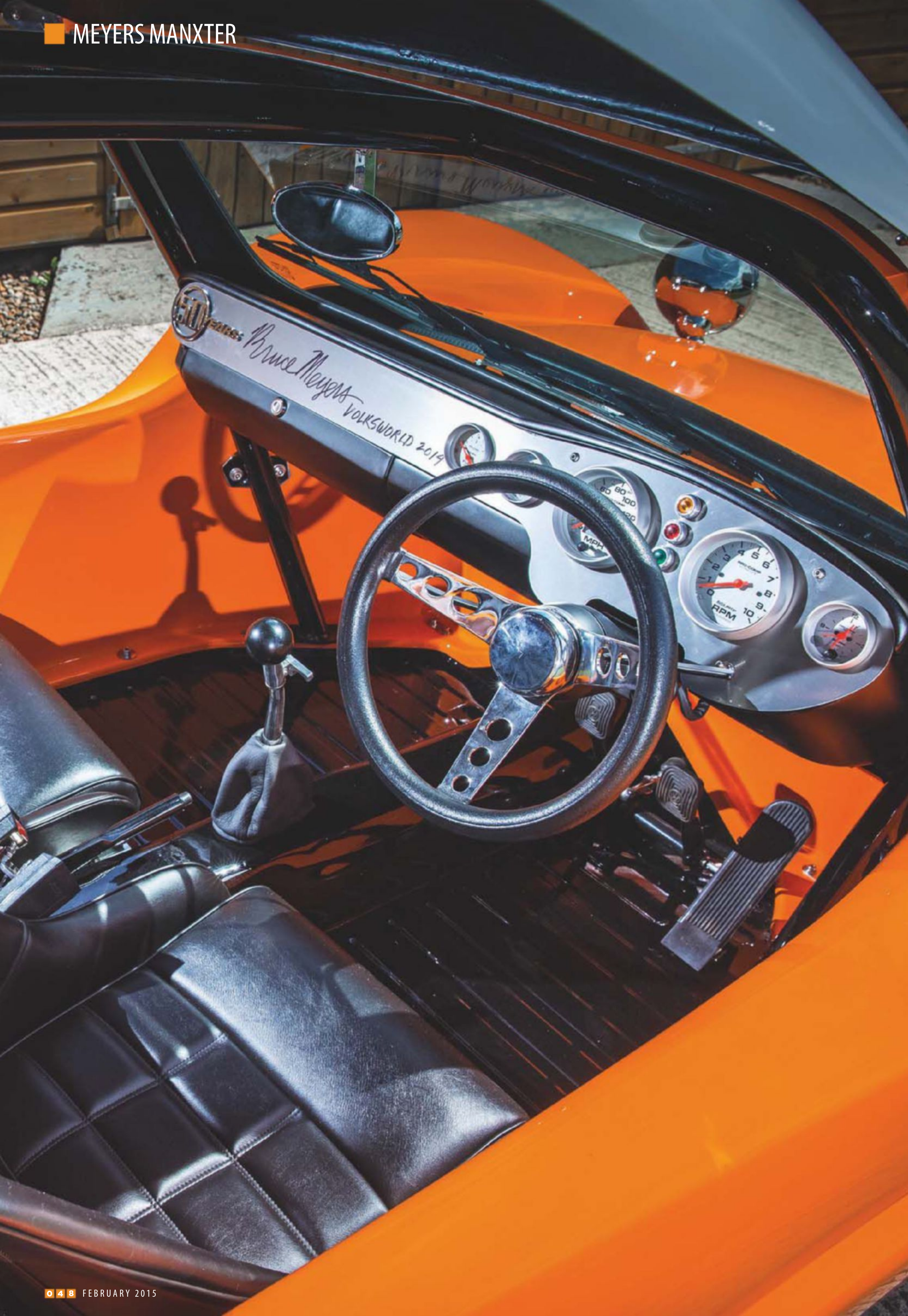


Auto Meter Pro Comp Ultra Lite gauges



The engine is a 1914cc Type 1 with CB Performance heads, a mild cam, twin 44IDF Webers and a Manx Sidewinder exhaust. Bellcrank linkage is from GWD in Germany and all tinware detailing is in gloss black

Ram Flo air filters are neat, and work, too


50 years
Bruce Meyers
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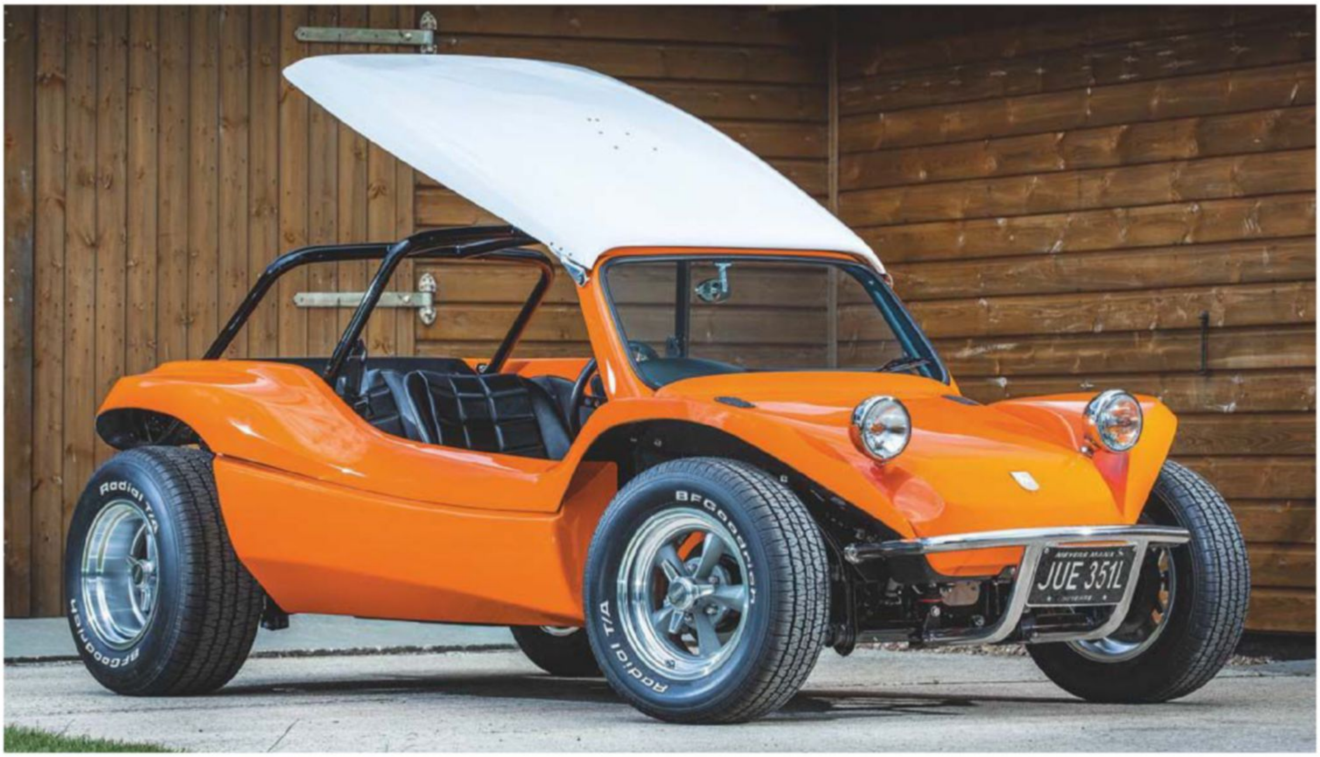
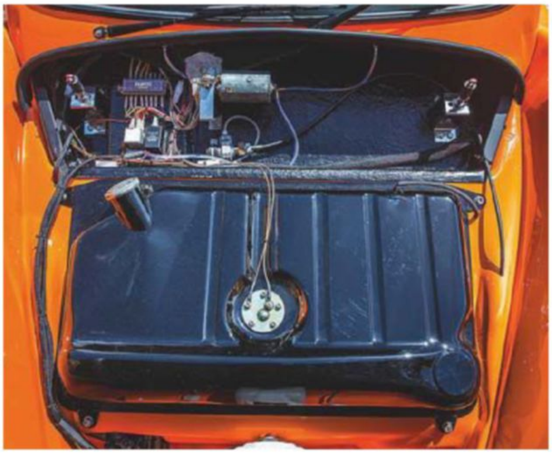


Tilt hardtop roof is an optional extra, but turns a Manxter into a much more useable vehicle in the UK climate



A lift-off bonnet makes access to the wiring and fuel tank much better than on most Buggies. Note the modified filler neck on the tank

> “A hitherto unheard of level of occupant safety for a Beach Buggy”

complicated, but it does need to be done right, and we do all of ours on a jig.”

You also need a fuel tank, as that mounts to the body, and while you could just wang in the stock one from your donor car, you won’t be surprised to hear that’s not what Flatlands do. “US-built Manxters use a stock late model tank with a bit of flexible pipe added to the filler neck and a universal cap, but we don’t like to see Jubilee clips, so we use a repro early tank, cut the filler neck off and weld up the hole, then transfer it to the top left of the tank, so you can use a proper VW fuel cap.”

Not only was this Manxter built under the watchful eyes of its originators, Bruce and Winnie Meyers, but this is serial no.1, the very first kit that came to the UK in 2008, so it’s doubly special

The build process

Just briefly to explain the build process in a little more detail, the front beam fits as VW intended, but the gearbox fits via a special mount that comes as part of the Manxter kit. To the gearbox cradle is then bolted an H-frame, to which are bolted the longitudinal side impact bars, which tie in to the front beam. Only then can the body be mounted, and the six-point rollcage structure then bolted up to the side impact bars, sandwiching the body between the two. The curved windscreen frame wraps around the front hoop of the ’cage, which incorporates the hinges for the optional elevating roof.

Mechanically, like any Beach Buggy, you can go as wild or as basic as you like. This one is pretty basic, meaning it’s got a standard balljoint beam with Sway-A-Way adjusters and standard Beetle shocks. “You don’t need anything fancy on there as you want it a bit soft at the front,” explains Mark. “You certainly don’t want any anti-roll bars going on.” This particular ’pan had been IRS’d in the past, so it now uses a GT-spec (3.88:1 final drive) IRS gearbox with stock driveshafts and CV joints. Likewise, brakes are standard VW, discs up front, drums at the back, though all four hubs are Chevy stud pattern so the Rocket Racing wheels bolt straight up.

Customer spec

With the wheels on and the engine in place, it’s down to the interior and wiring. There’s no wiring loom included in the Manxter kit, for the simple reason that everybody has different requirements for lights, gauges etc. so each one is built bespoke to customer spec. “That’s probably two days work in itself, just wiring one of these,” says Mark, so that’s another area we took a bit of a liberty with at The VolksWorld Show, but then watching someone construct a wiring loom isn’t half as exciting as seeing a Buggy come together and be driven out of the hall on the Sunday, so that was a liberty we were prepared to take.

Regardless of the way it was achieved, the end result come close of play on the Sunday was a complete Meyers Manxter, wired, fired and ready to drive. What made it all the more special was that Bruce and Winnie Meyers had the opportunity to witness the whole build. Mark: “They really enjoyed it, and seemed to be genuinely interested in the way we build their cars over here. There are definitely a few differences in the way we do things to the way they do things in the States, so hopefully the whole experience was beneficial all round.” For our money, the Buggy build was a great addition to the show, and the Manxter 2+2 is a great addition to the vibrant UK Beach Buggy scene. ■

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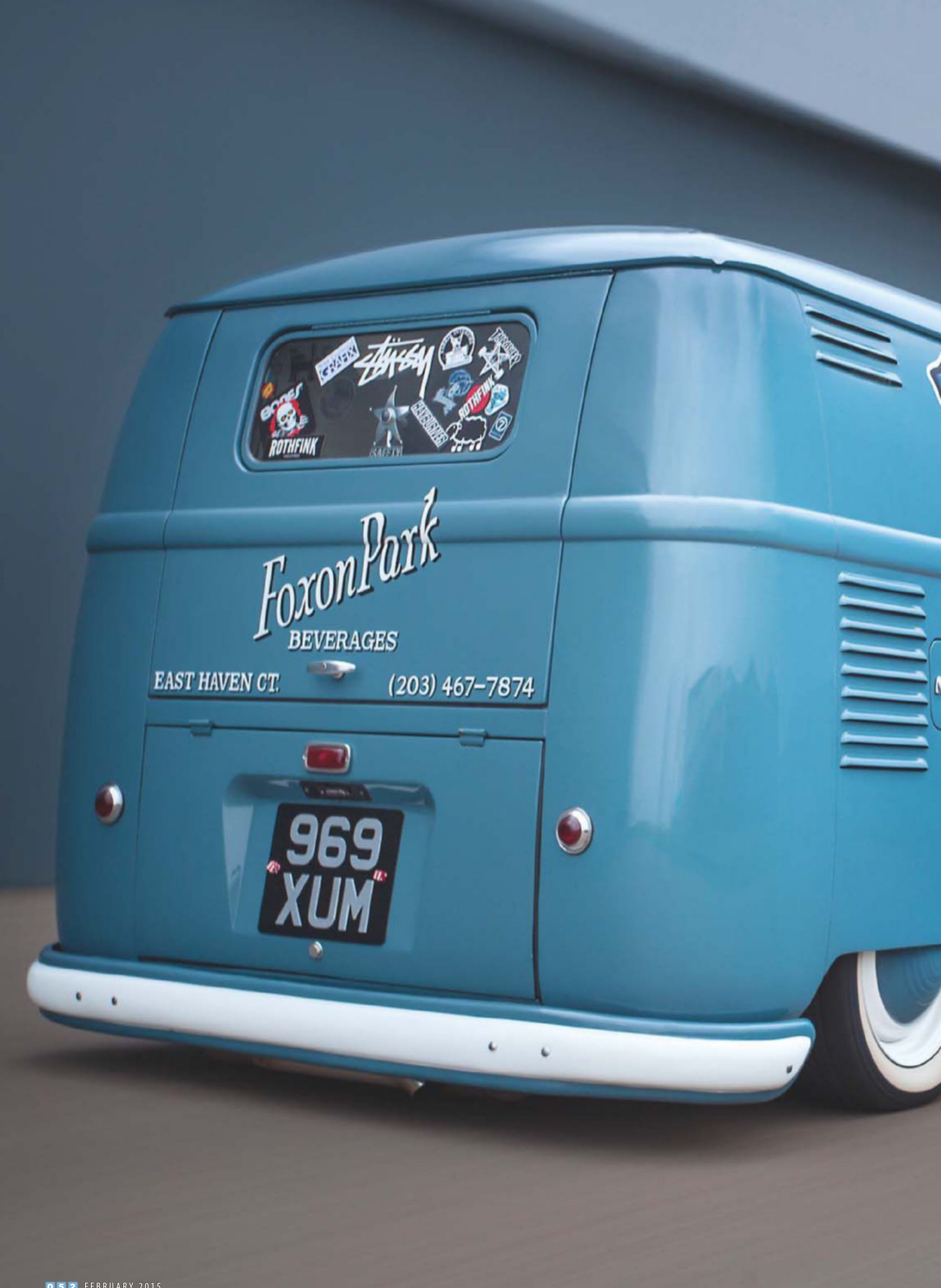
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Panel slam

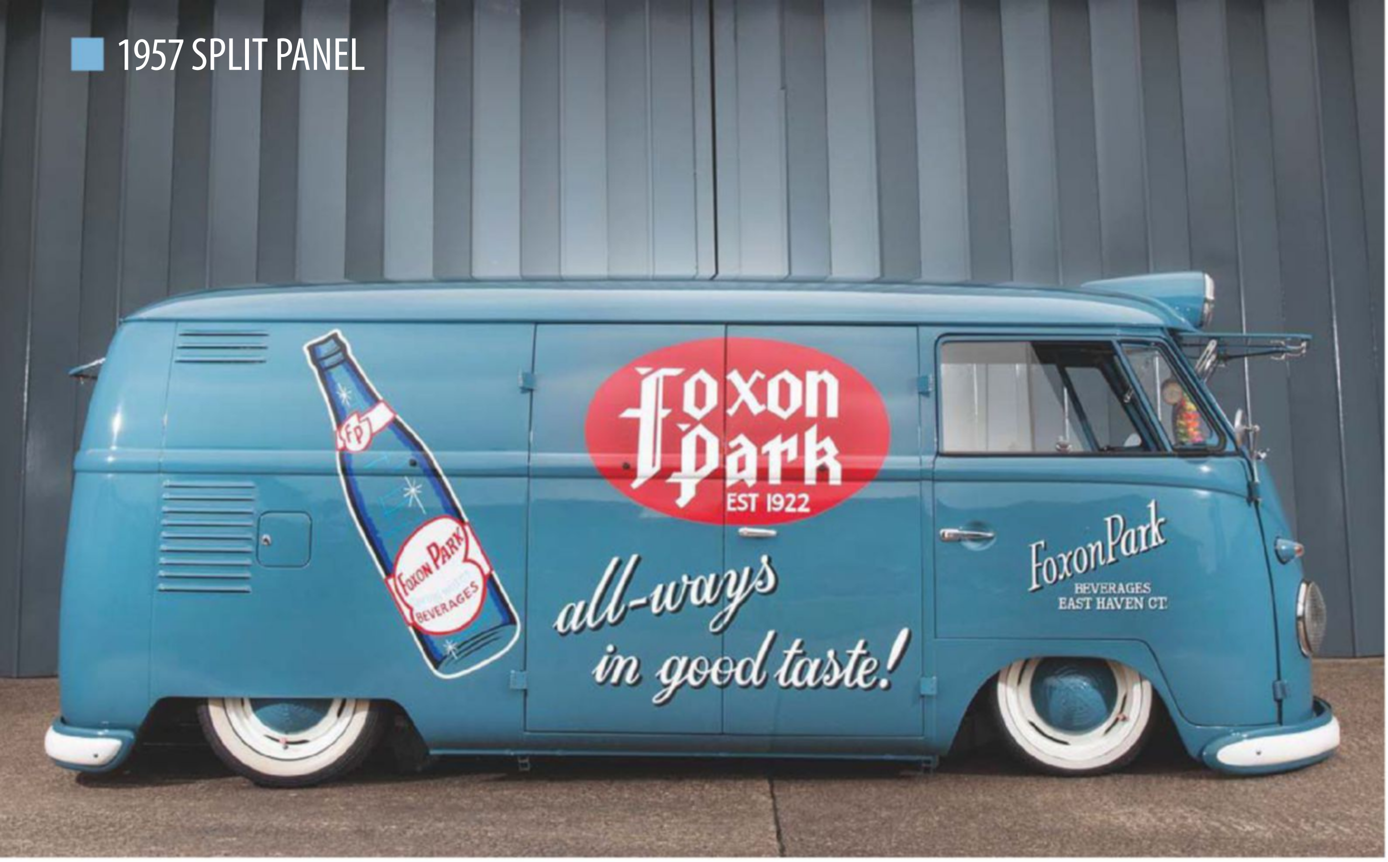
When Chris and Sharon Smith bought a 1957 Panel Van that was fresh in from the USA, they decided to *Play Their Cards Right*…

Words Matt Keene **Photos** Tom Gidden

I'm going to go out on a limb here and declare from the outset that this Bus rocks. The killer stance, the superb signwriting on Dove Blue paint, the simple, stock wheels with body-colour hubcaps, and the fact that it's a no-frills Panel Van make it a refreshing departure from some of the 'more-windows-the-better' builds we see today. Sometimes it's easy to forget that simplicity can often win favour and, in VW Bus terms, it doesn't get much more basic than a Panel Van. That's not to say Panel Vans aren't desirable or cool, for they are both, and also offer a perfect canvas to show off creative designs and act as moving advertisement hoardings.

Now, I'm a great lover of slammed Buses, particularly ones that have been soundly engineered, but it isn't just the stance of this Bus that does it for me, for that would be quite shallow (excuse the dreadful pun). No, this whole Bus is an exercise in 'getting it right'.

For example, it's often said that original 15-inch Bus wheels look perfect on any Split, be it a Commercial, Kombi or Deluxe. Add a set of body colour-detailed hubcaps and some whitewall sidewalls, and you instantly have a winner. Then there's simplicity of keeping the body stock, albeit accentuated with front and rear safari windows and a 'cyclops' headlight – a nice little nod to custom, but not so far as to deviate too far from the classic lines penned in 1950. Next, there's the ubiquitous commercial colour –



The clean lines and large surface area make a Split Panel Van the perfect canvas for some artwork. By not going over the top with accessories and wheels, the Smiths have struck the perfect balance of cool with this Bus

Dove Blue, spanning the entire Split Bus production from 1950 to 1967. VW got it right with that one. Finally, the *pièce de résistance* are the hand-drawn graphics that transform this Bus into a mobile billboard. For me, it's the perfect recipe for success.

Speaking of success, the owners of this fantastic 1957 US import have had their fair share. Chris, at the ripe old age of 38, has gone into semi-retirement after selling his plant hire and construction business, whilst Sharon is very busy tending to her health and safety-orientated business.

Although they have had some seriously fancy cars in the past – Ferraris, Audi R8, Porsche 996 Turbos and the like, the Smiths are definitely grounded, as Chris' first car was a white 1972 Beetle, followed by a slammed peppermint green version a little later on. "My love for VWs started there and then," recalls Chris. "Like all teenagers, I spent most of my childhood getting up to all sorts of mischief. I was properly into skateboarding culture from the age of 12 through to 17 and the VW thing just seemed to fit in. A nasty accident put me in plaster for nearly four months. I was trying out a new deck and I attempted an ollie to noseslide 180 shovit across a bench when I blew my knee out, big style."

> **"Dancing around with flowers in their hair"**

Body building

What followed were years of rehabilitation and a recommendation from his physiotherapist to go to the gym to build up some muscle on his damaged leg. "I got so into the whole gym and body-building thing that it became part of my life," continues Chris. "People can't quite believe it when I pull up and spoon myself out of the Split. It's pure comedy."

So how did Chris and Sharon come across this Panel? "Whilst I got into other car scenes, such as Jap cars, supercars and even fast bikes, every time I saw a Split or a Bug on the road it would always put a smile on my face. I knew that at some stage I would have another VW in my life. On a trip out with the wife one day, we saw a convoy of Split Screen Buses and I looked over to Sharon and she had a big grin on her face. I looked her in the eye and said 'let's get one.'"

In Chris and Sharon's own words, they had "visions of sunny days and happy rainbows and dancing around with flowers in their hair." So they started looking for a suitable ride. The first Bus they went to view was a no go. "It was okay, but it wasn't really what we wanted. We fancied an earlier one with a small back window and ribbed bumpers." So the search continued and eventually up popped the 'Foxon' Bus on pistonheads.com. Chris: "Me and the wife took a trip 'up't norff' to have a peep at it." There they met a guy called Jake who had imported the Bus from the States in 2008. It was painted in matt olive green and already had the Foxon logos on the sides. Chris asked about the history of the Bus and it turned out it was originally from Ohio, and had been owned by a chap called Brad. Foxon Park is a drinks company in Connecticut, USA and, whilst they never actually had any VW delivery vans, they did have other old panel vans back in the day sporting their company logos and artwork. Brad loved the idea of painting his own Bus as an homage to the erstwhile Foxon delivery vans, so that's just what he did.

A month after viewing the Foxon Bus, it was sat on the Smiths' driveway. "We started doing local trips in it, but every trip out something fell off, or a new crack would appear in the bodywork, or a bit of the interior would whack me on the head. It was nothing like the rainbows and dancing around we thought it would be," chuckles Chris over the 'phone. "Also, the

TECH INFO

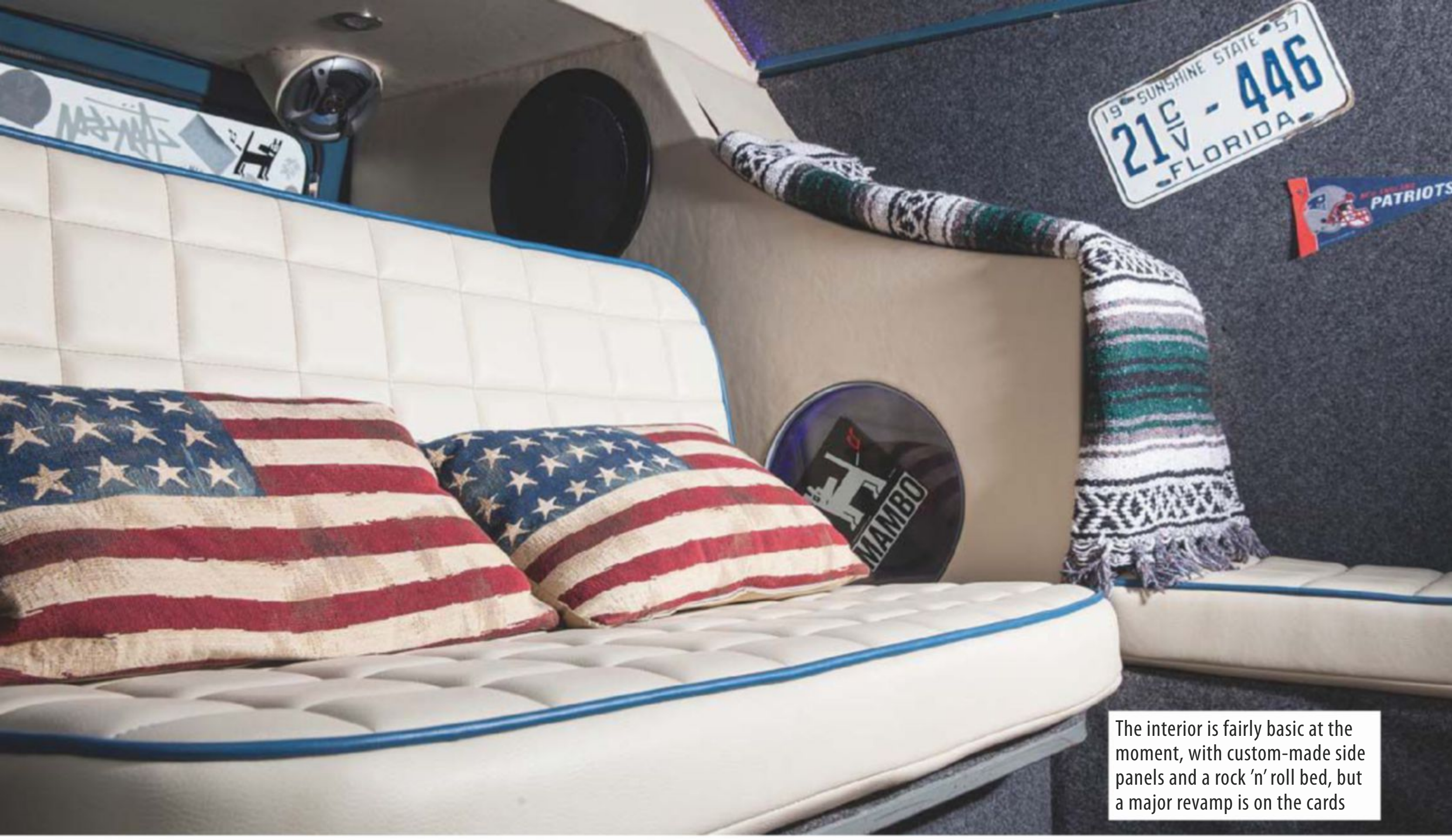
BODY: stock with safari windows, 'cyclops' extra headlight and artwork by Allen Osbourne

ENGINE: Laurie Pettit-built 1776 with 34ICT carbs and Vintage Speed exhaust Est. 75bhp

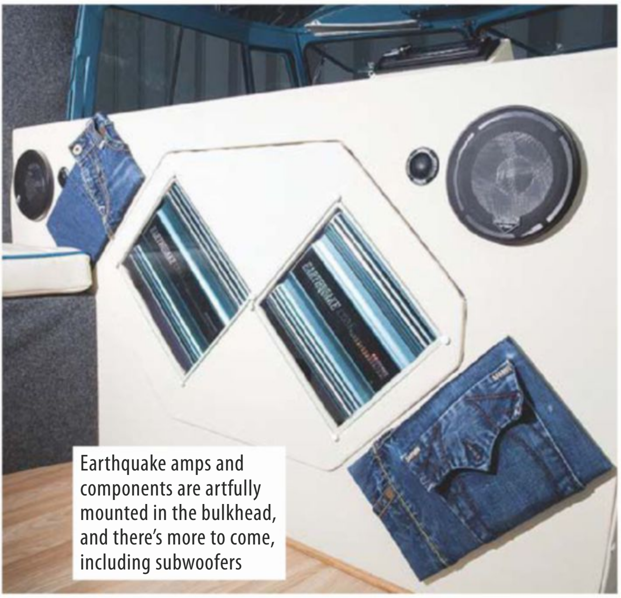
GEARBOX: Type 1 Beetle IRS conversion

SUSPENSION: Rayvern Hydraulics full custom-build with narrowed and raised beam, tubbing on all four corners and fluid dispersal spring box system

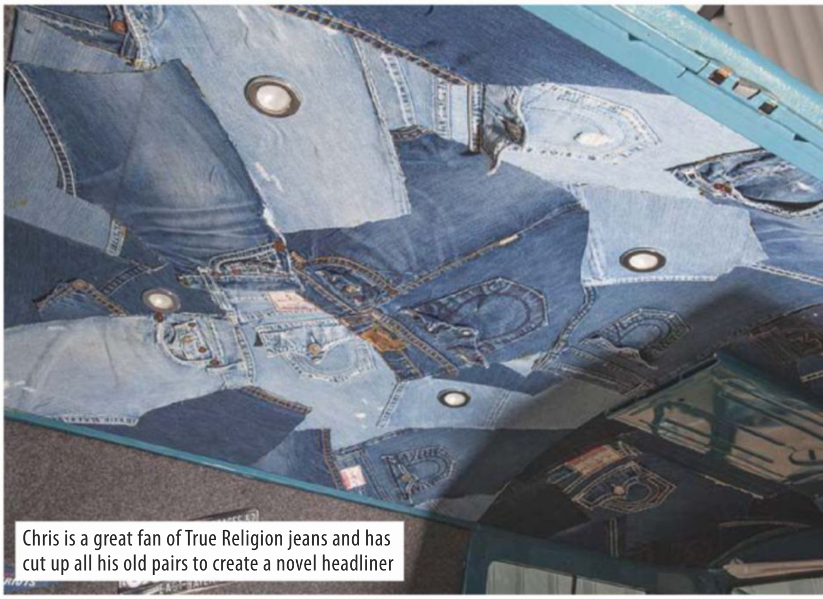
WHEELS AND TYRES: Stock 15-inch Bus steels with painted hubcaps and whitewall bands added by Mr. Whitewalls



The interior is fairly basic at the moment, with custom-made side panels and a rock 'n' roll bed, but a major revamp is on the cards



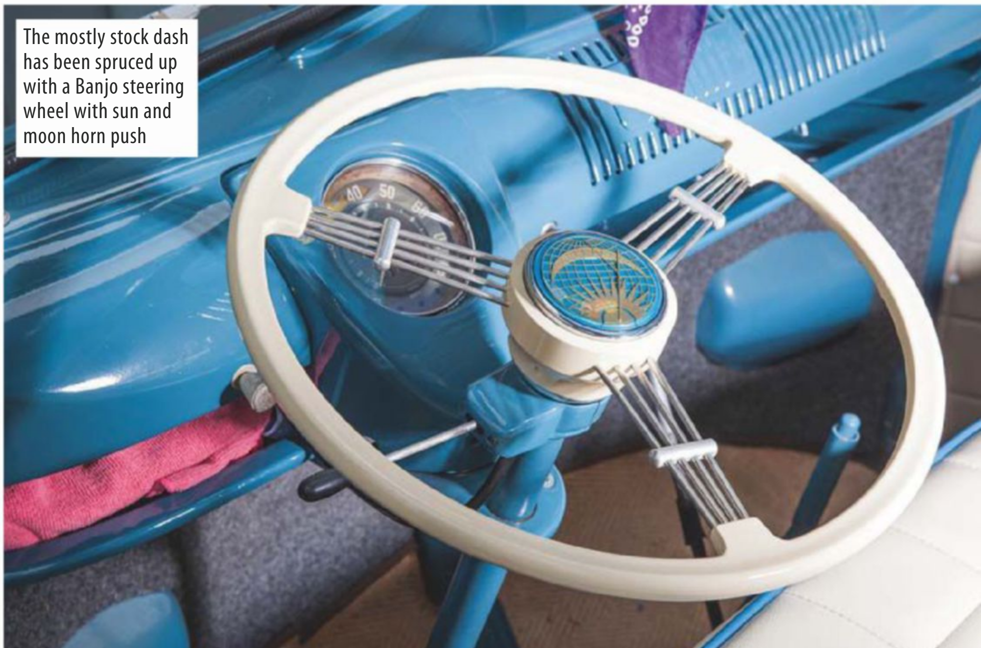
Earthquake amps and components are artfully mounted in the bulkhead, and there's more to come, including subwoofers



Chris is a great fan of True Religion jeans and has cut up all his old pairs to create a novel headliner

It's business up front and party out back in this Bus. The unusual location of the head unit hints at when this Panel gets most used

The load area comprises a simple hardwood floor with a Mooneyes welcome mat



The mostly stock dash has been spruced up with a Banjo steering wheel with sun and moon horn push

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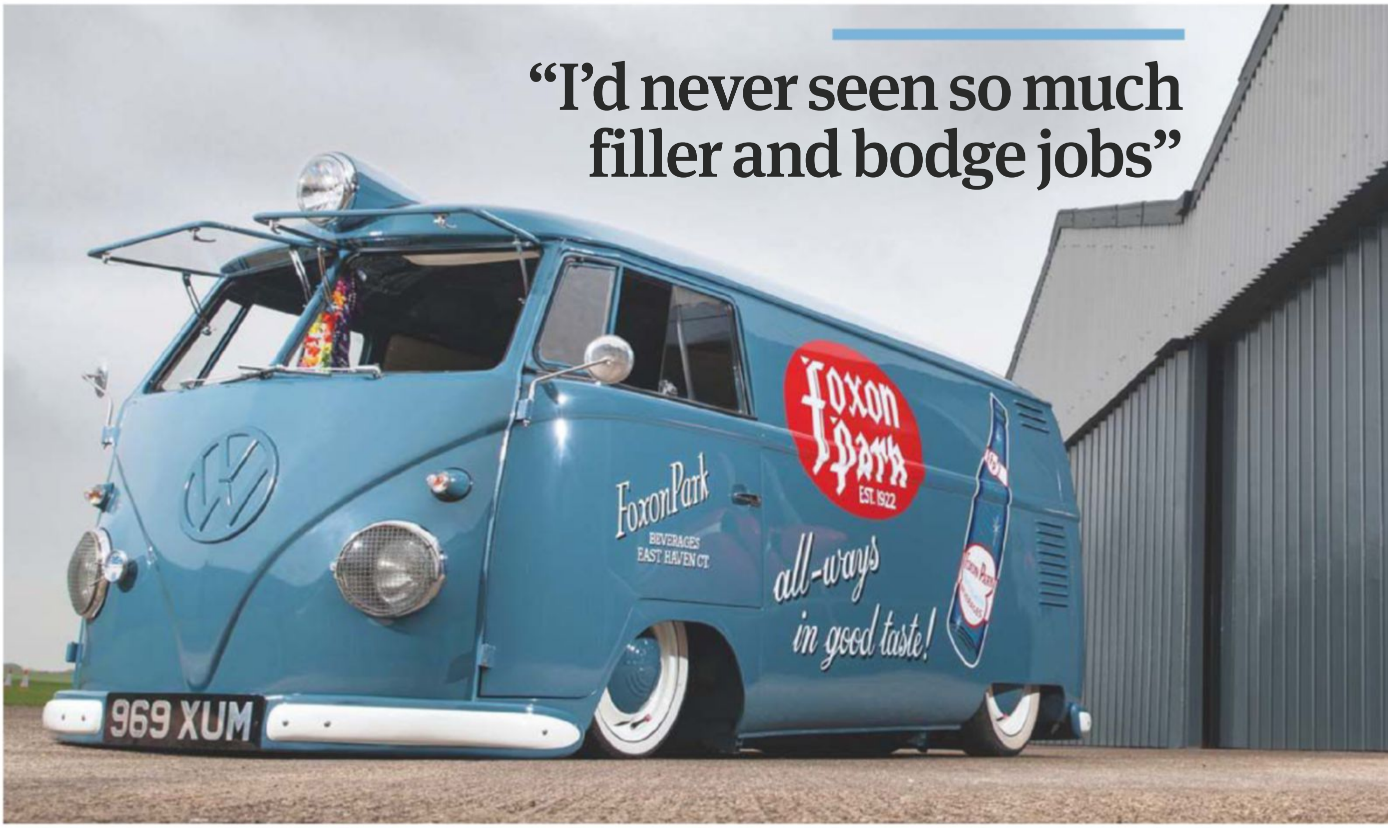
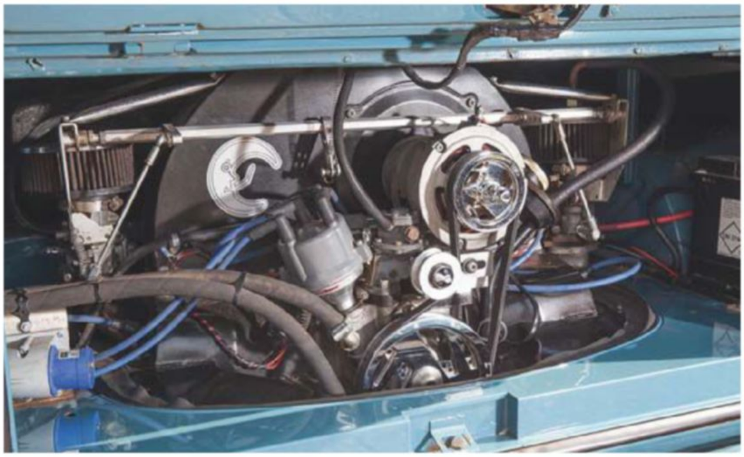


"I'd never seen so much filler and bodge jobs"



Hydraulic suspension means at the touch of a button the Van can be raised from the floor to almost stock height

That's a Laurie Pettit 1776 with twin Weber 34ICTs, Pertronix dizzy and a serpentine pulley kit

You'd never guess there's an entire hydraulic suspension set up beneath the modified bench seat

same mates that used to give me stick when I had a Beetle were now rippin' it out of me, asking whether I'd fallen on hard times!"

The first show the Smiths did in the Bus was VW Action, which they absolutely loved. "There we met a great bunch of cool people, who we are now friends with, especially Brian and Vicky, aka 'the Moodys'. They put me on to Bobby Wilcox at Milk & Two, who gave the Van a good going over and gave us some options. Sharon and I had a chat and we gave Bobby the nod to have it blasted, cut out all of the nasties and replace what was needed, which was a fair bit. I'd never seen so much filler and bodge jobs, it really wasn't doing my OCD any favours."

When Bobby had finished the metal resto, it was time to decide on the colour. Chris: "We didn't want the same olive green as it was a bit dull, so we decided on the original colour of L31 Dove Blue. We hunted around for a good paint shop and found a guy known as Clever Trevor, who had painted a few Buses and came highly recommended."

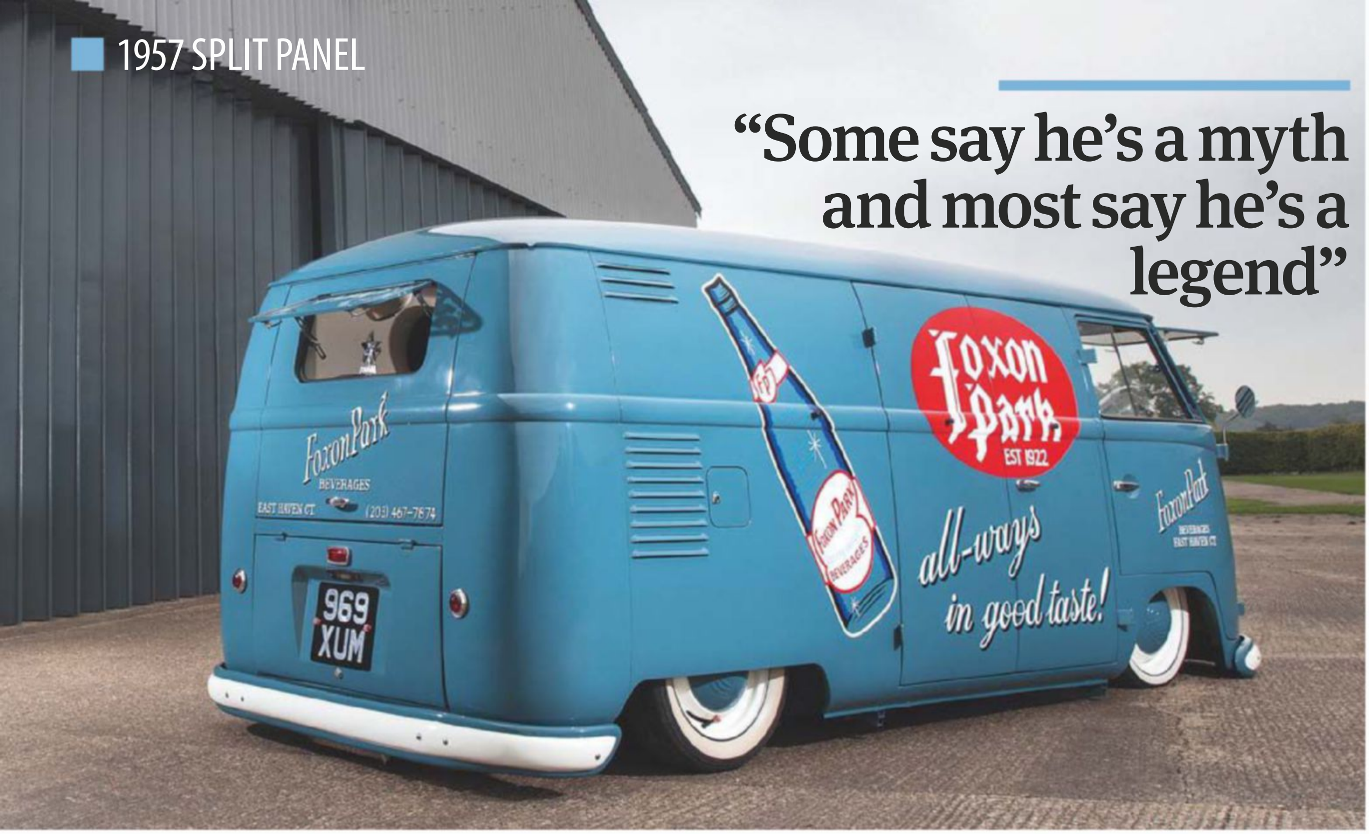
A good engine guy

Whilst the Bus was off receiving its shiny new coat, Chris scanned further down his shopping list and researched the 'net for a good engine guy. "The same name kept popping up – Laurie Pettit – so, after finding his number and speaking to him, we arranged to get our old 1600 up to him and for him to turn it into a 1776 with twin Weber 34ICT carbs." "When the engine was finished, Laurie brought it down to us himself. From the edge of Scotland to Northants. It was a real pleasure to meet Laurie – he's a total loon, but a fun guy."

So, with a freshly painted Bus and the motivation back to power her, Chris and Clever Trevor got to work putting the Panel back together, although it wasn't all plain sailing. "It did get frustrating at times

BEHIND THE WHEEL

"I absolutely love driving the Foxon, and I take it out as much as possible when the sun shines. The Bus cruises all day at 55-60mph and rides surprisingly well when slammed. I usually drive it with the suspension juiced to about two inches off the floor and flick the remote height switch whenever I encounter speed humps, which pumps it up to a pre-set height. Ray [Rayvern Hydraulics] was himself impressed with the ride quality, which I think says a lot about how the Van drives. It's simply awesome. Sharon and I attend as many shows as possible and have even won two or three trophies with the Bus. We love it!"



> “Some say he’s a myth and most say he’s a legend”

Since the rise (ha ha) of air suspension, hydraulics have fallen out of favour, but there are still some who swear by it

working on her. At one point my temper kicked in and I told Trev to take her [the Bus] around the back and burn her…” Fortunately, Trevor didn’t oblige and the build continued, albeit slightly jaded.

Eventually, after what Chris describes as “lots of stress”, the Bus was finished and it was time to collect it from Trevor. “I had to send Sharon to pick her up as I had to be on site with my work, so she was a little nervous being the first person to take the Foxon for a run. I got home just as Sharon was pulling onto the drive and I was buzzing, but it dawned on me that it was far from finished as it was missing the Foxon logos.”

Traditional signwriter

Knowing the Bus would not be complete without the logos that had drawn them to it in the first place, Chris put the feelers out for a traditional signwriter and, shortly after, best mate Carl and his dad, Nigel, put him on to a local chap called Allen Osbourne. “Within a week, a marquee was set up at home so he could work undercover, but still have natural light and, after two days of watching the genius work, and 1,000 cups of green tea, it was done – the Foxon was the Foxon again.” Chris was dead happy, but deep down knew there was still something amiss. “I looked deep into her soul,” recalls Chris, “and she said to me ‘I need a proper slam job.’ Bingo! I knew just the man for the job.” With that, Chris got straight on the blower to Ray at Rayvern Hydraulics. “Some say he’s a myth and most say he’s a legend, but I got through to him to see if he could fit us in. Seven months was the earliest, but I knew it would be worth the wait.”

True to his word, seven months later the Foxon was driven out to a remote farm in Cambridgeshire. Chris: “As the discussion progressed we went lower and lower. It was like a scene out of *Play Your Cards Right,* with Ray being Brucie.”

The Foxon stayed with Ray for a few weeks where it received chassis notches, tubs, a custom beam and a full hydraulic system. Shortly after completion, Ray delivered it back to the Smiths. Chris: “When Ray drove the Van off the trailer and dropped the juice, Sharon and I had a huge grin on our faces. As Brucie would say, we were right to go lower.”

THE SUSPENSION

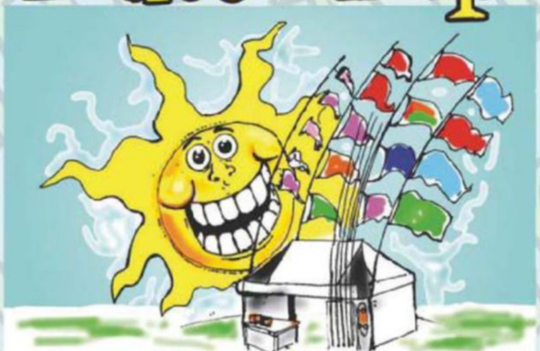
Rayvern Hydraulics (www.rayvernhydraulics.com) did all of the suspension mods to this Bus, starting with a custom-made narrowed beam that sits significantly higher in the Bus than standard, meaning…

…some major surgery was required in order for the front wheels to turn in the arches. Ray made some 40mm tubs to give the required clearance, and notched the chassis for the track rods

At the back it was necessary to tub the rear arches and raise the petrol tank two inches too, meaning the filler neck had to be re-routed to clear the offside tyre

Beneath the front seat sits the hydraulic system. Ray designed the fluid displacement spring box system, which transfers shock load from the hydraulic rams to remote springs. This is said to gives the instant, fast lift of hydraulics with the ride quality of air

Autocamp



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SHOW REPORT

DTA end-of-season meet

Run for cover

Dodging the sweaty hordes outside, we popped along to the DTA's annual show

Words James Peene **Photos** James and Steve

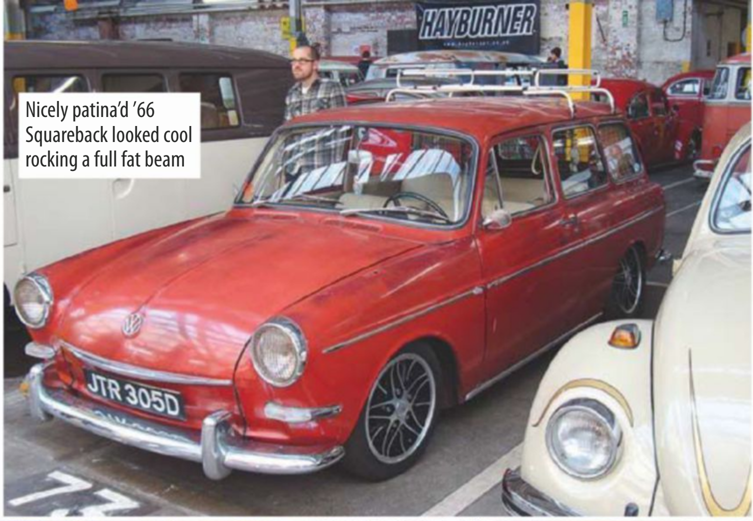
There was only one reason for being in Birmingham city centre on October 19, and it wasn't for the half marathon taking place at the end of the road we were parked on. Not by a long chalk! The sweaty lycra and tin foil blanket brigade didn't have an inkling that just a few yards down the road, within the confines of the old James Cond Printing Works, the DTA were holding their end-of-season shindig. And what a shindig it was, too.

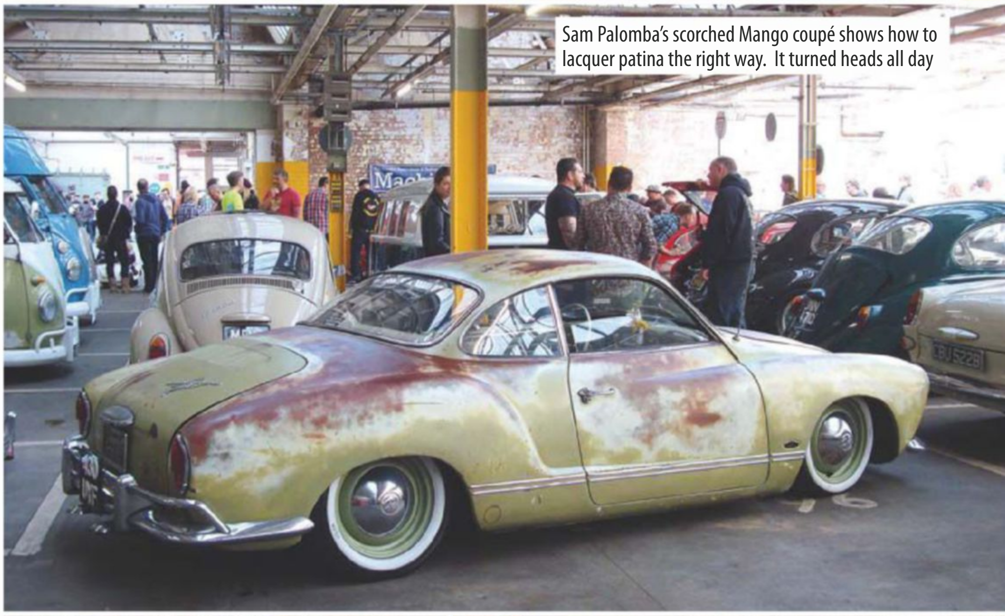
Their last two meets had been held out on the street, at the mercy of the elements and Sunday dump run crowd, so the move indoors was a top idea. In fact, the venue was an inspired choice all considered, with enough room for pretty much every car that turned up and, for any that couldn't get in, there was a bit of on-street parking and an overflow car park just round the corner.

But enough blather about parking, it's the cars that were there we care about, and it was clear from the moment we arrived that a lot of people had made the effort and come a long way to attend. I mean, Cornwall to Birmingham takes a bit of commitment in an air-cooled VW, especially for a one-day show like this.

Not only that, a number of people had made some pretty swanky trophies that were dished out at the end of the day, but it was the laid back, yet enthusiastic, approach to proceedings that left the biggest impression. If only more shows were like this…

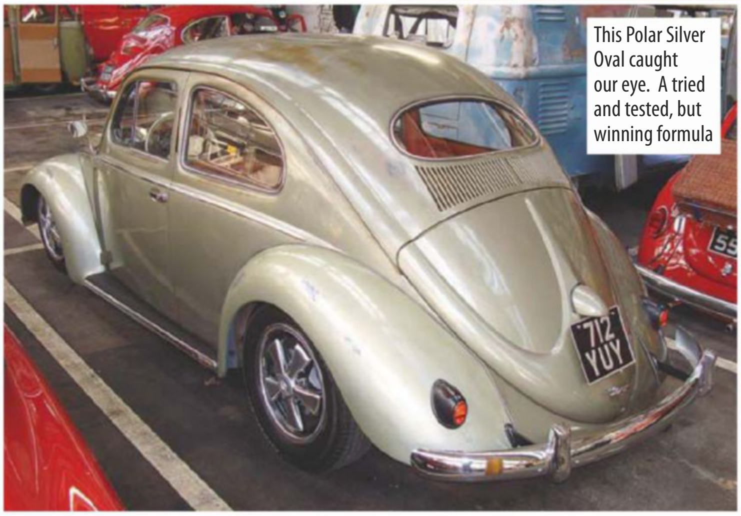
Sadly, the venue is due for demolition, but we're looking forward to seeing where the DTA take us in 2015. ■


Nicely patina'd '66 Squareback looked cool rocking a full fat beam


Sam Palomba's scorched Mango coupé shows how to lacquer patina the right way. It turned heads all day

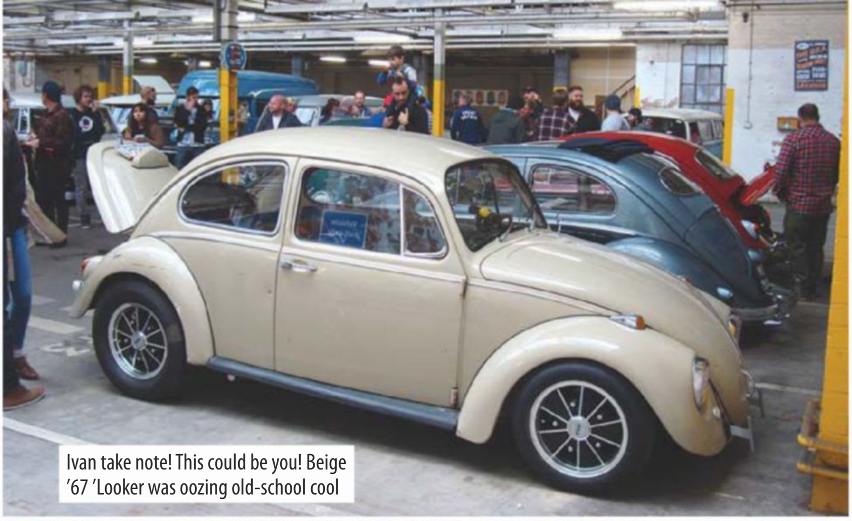
Carl Pointon's soon-to-be-featured-in-*C&B* Late Panel

Gavin Jones made a big effort to be there in his '58 Standard

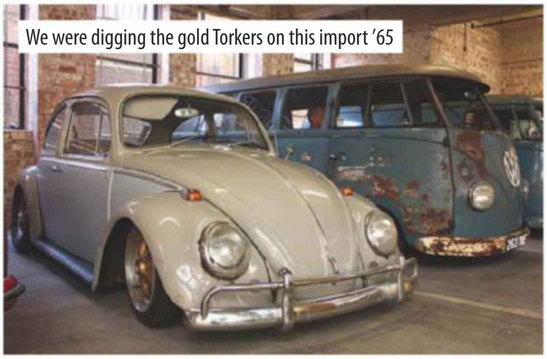

This Polar Silver Oval caught our eye. A tried and tested, but winning formula

A rare outing for IKustoms' Iain Strachan's RHD Australian Notchback. More lows in the pipeline

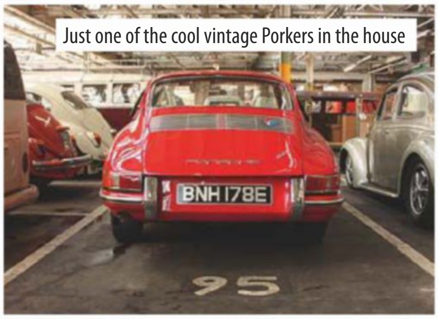
DTA end-of-season meet



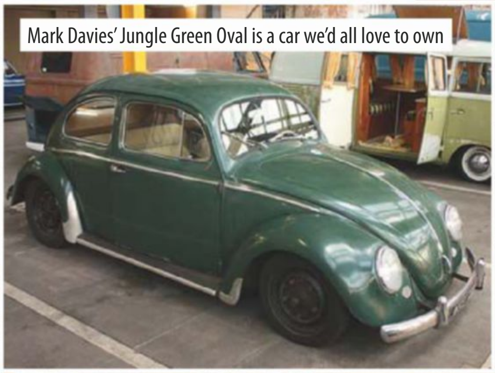
Ivan take note! This could be you! Beige '67 'Looker was oozing old-school cool



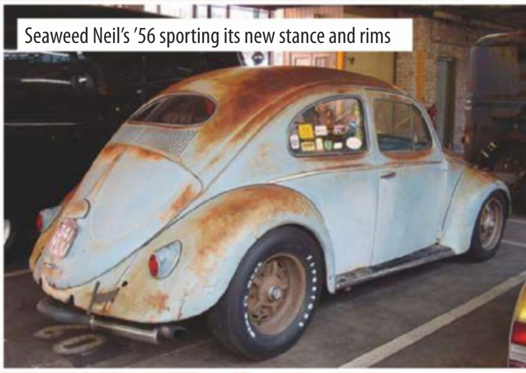
We were digging the gold Torkers on this import '65



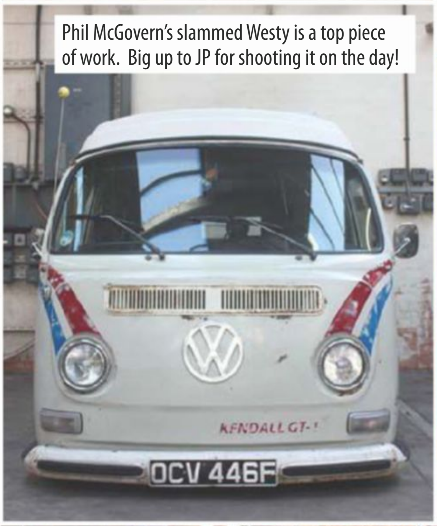
Just one of the cool vintage Porkers in the house



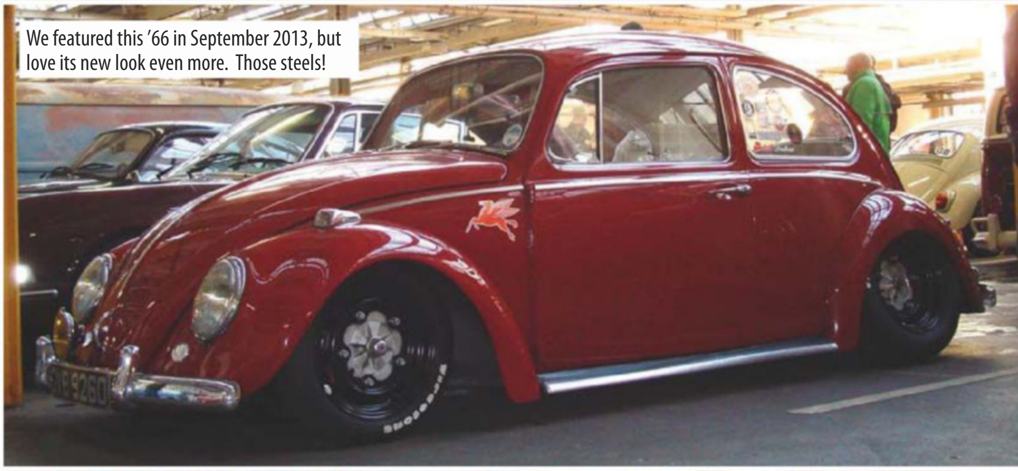
Mark Davies' Jungle Green Oval is a car we'd all love to own



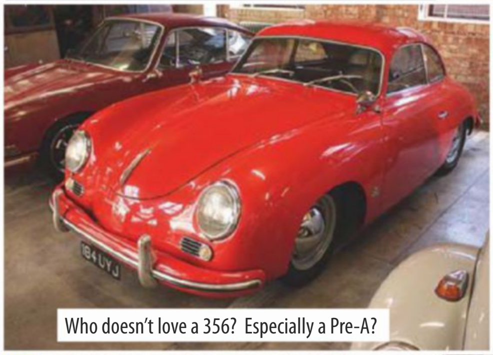
Seaweed Neil's '56 sporting its new stance and rims



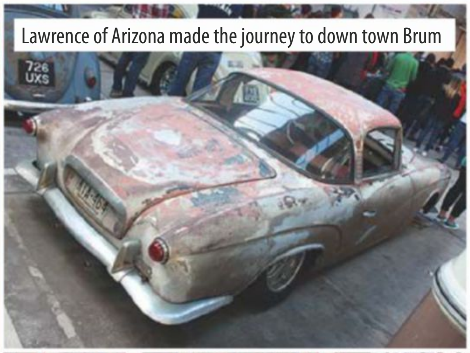
Phil McGovern's slammed Westy is a top piece of work. Big up to JP for shooting it on the day!



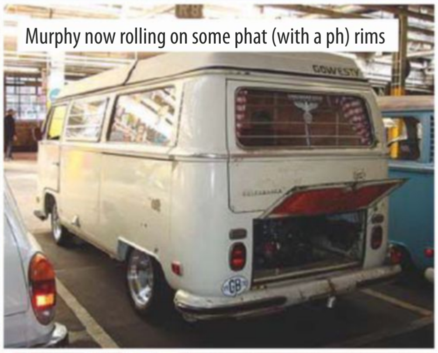
We featured this '66 in September 2013, but love its new look even more. Those steels!



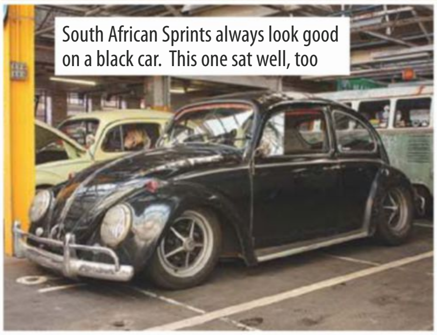
Who doesn't love a 356? Especially a Pre-A?



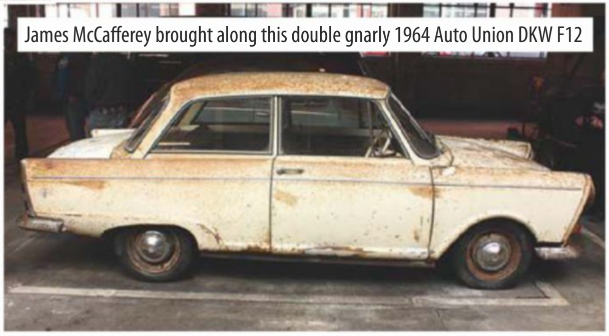
Lawrence of Arizona made the journey to down town Brum



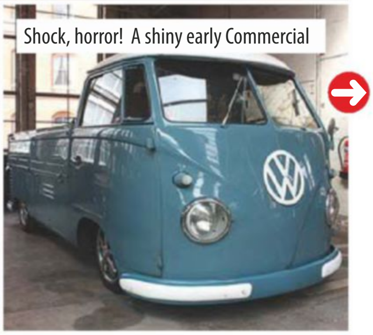
Murphy now rolling on some phat (with a ph) rims



South African Sprints always look good on a black car. This one sat well, too

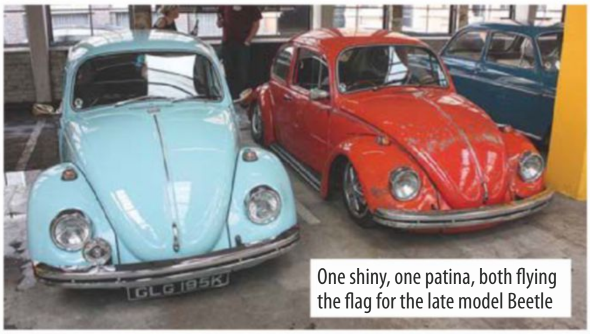


James McCafferey brought along this double gnarly 1964 Auto Union DKW F12

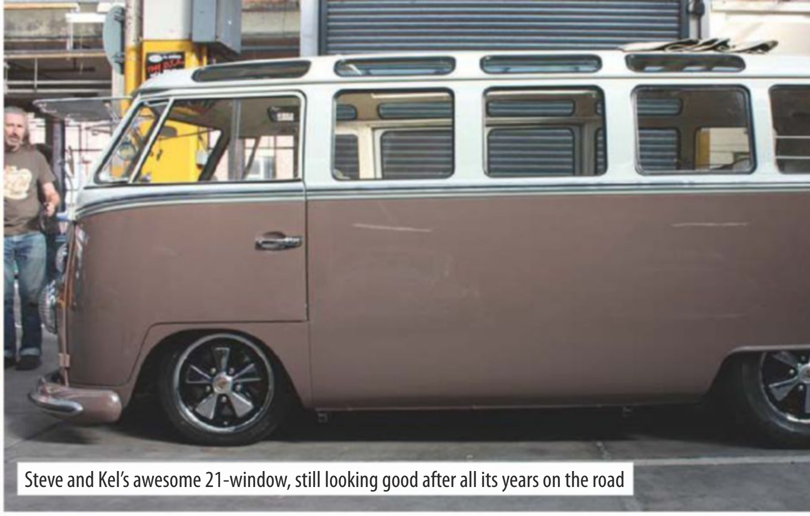


Shock, horror! A shiny early Commercial

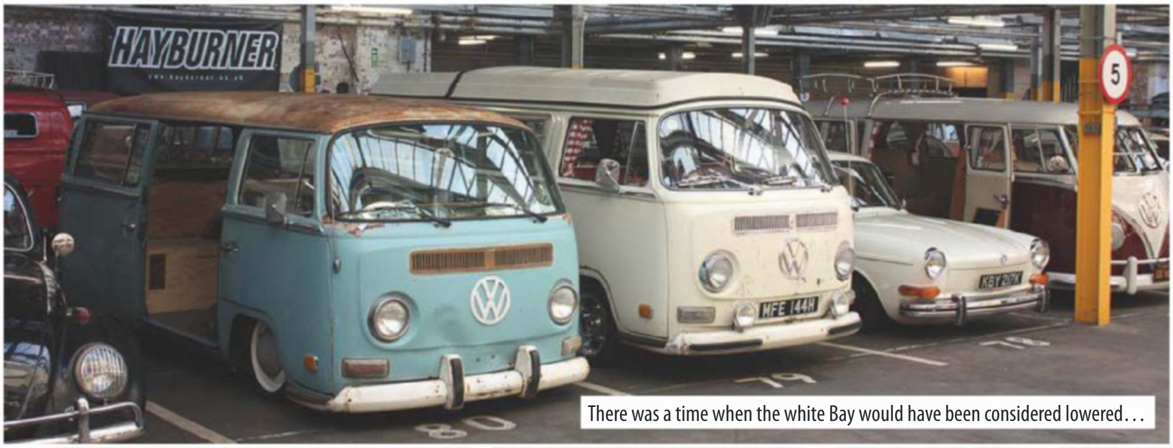
DTA end-of-season meet



One shiny, one patina, both flying the flag for the late model Beetle

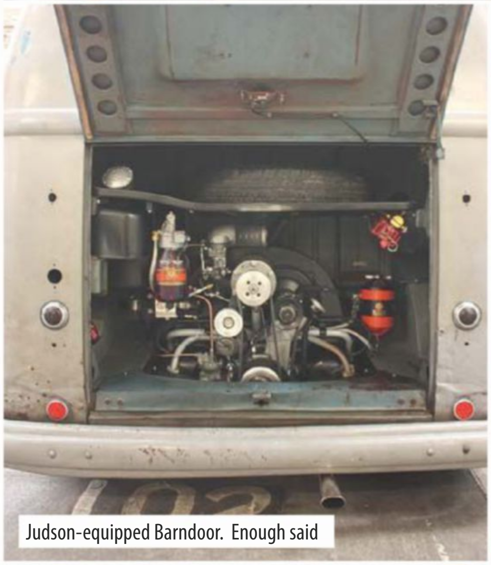


Steve and Kel's awesome 21-window, still looking good after all its years on the road

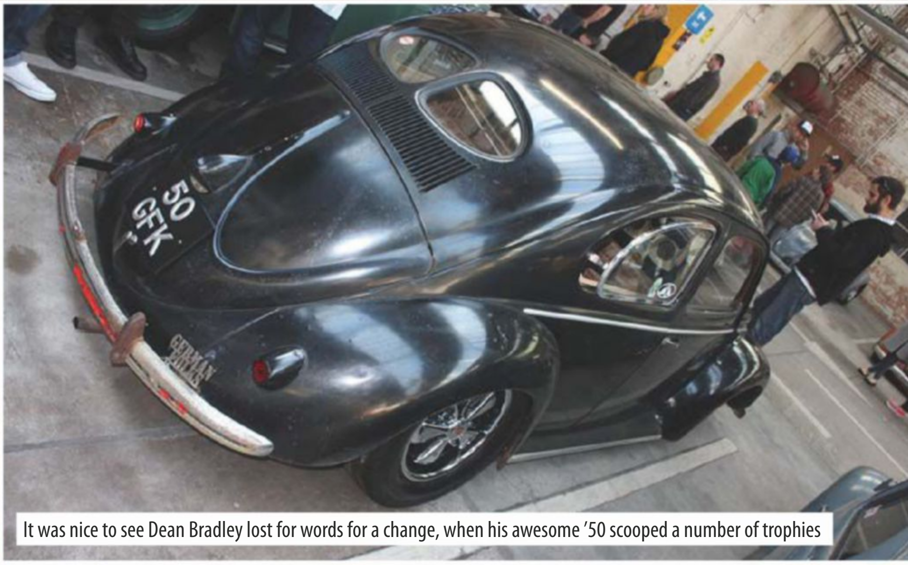


There was a time when the white Bay would have been considered lowered…

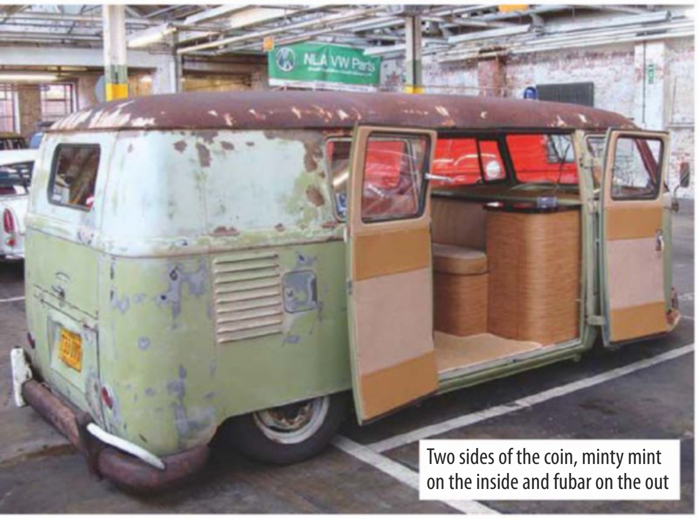
Charles Harlock's '65 now rocking steelies. We like!



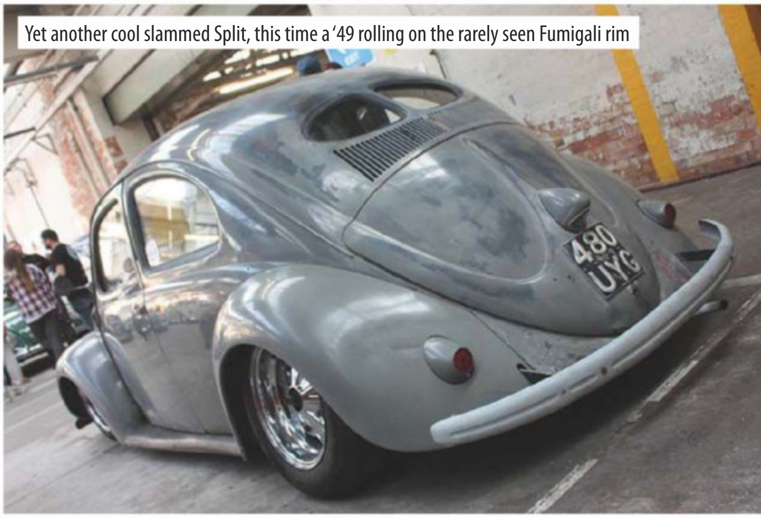
Judson-equipped Barndoor. Enough said



It was nice to see Dean Bradley lost for words for a change, when his awesome '50 scooped a number of trophies

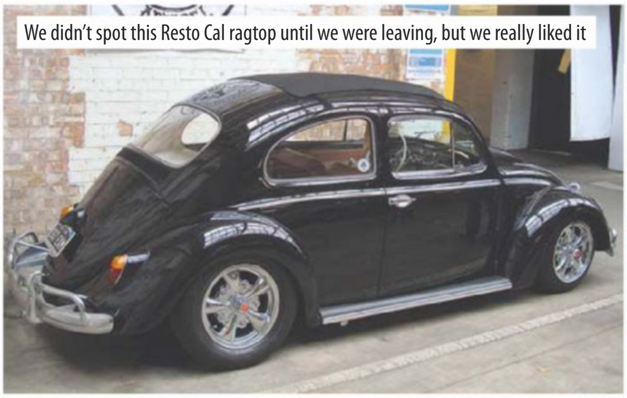


Two sides of the coin, minty mint on the inside and fubar on the out



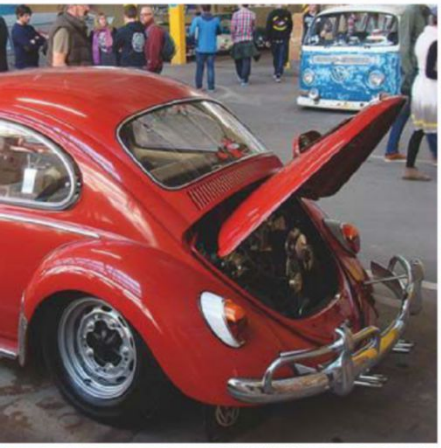
Yet another cool slammed Split, this time a '49 rolling on the rarely seen Fumigali rim

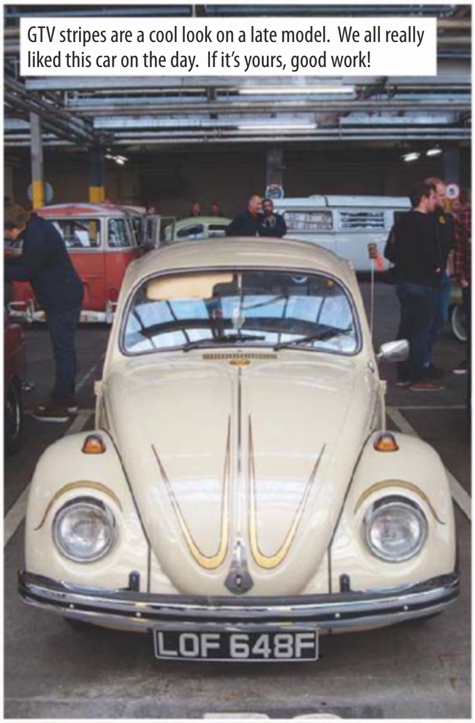
DTA end-of-season meet



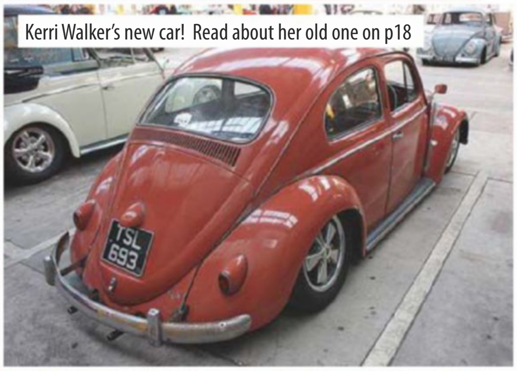
We didn't spot this Resto Cal ragtop until we were leaving, but we really liked it

Ex-industrial print works made a fantastic setting for the show





GTV stripes are a cool look on a late model. We all really liked this car on the day. If it's yours, good work!



Kerri Walker's new car! Read about her old one on p18

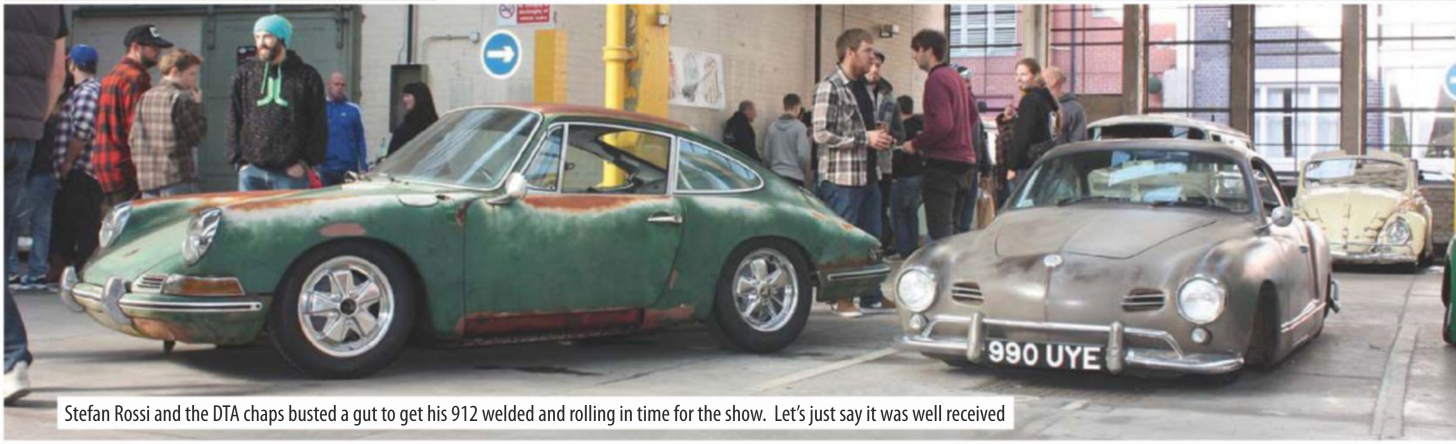
Spotted tucked away in the corner, we love the signwriting

December's cover star, Dan Smith's 15-window

Nice to see someone not shy of a spray gun!

If there was an unofficial theme on the day, it was patina

Joe Riley's air-riding '73 is a car we'd love to feature. Hint hint Joe



Stefan Rossi and the DTA chaps busted a gut to get his 912 welded and rolling in time for the show. Let's just say it was well received

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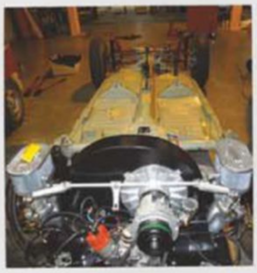

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An overview of a major VW dealership. Clearly, this was a well-established one, but it gave the novice franchisee something to aspire to. Check the Beetle van left of shot

Selling the VW

Part of the reason for VW's global success was its cohesive dealership and servicing plan. Here's how it was achieved

Words Neil Smart

Back in the day, in this case 1955 being 'the day', Volkswagen was just like many other businesses across the world with its eye on globalisation. With this in mind, VW produced a book to give any prospective franchisee direction and advice. Well, direction and advice is an understatement as they were more orders to follow, and the level of detail into which it went was incredible.

The book was titled *Richtig geplant, richtig gebaut*, which roughly translates to Correctly planned, correctly built. Followed to the letter, you couldn't fail to build it correctly, whether the it be a dealership or the business it could become.

The 100-page book measures 14½ x 10 inches (370mm x 250mm for our European readers) and is bound in a dark blue leatherette. It was printed in Braunschweig, the town next door to Wolfsburg.

After the initial contents and introduction pages, it kicks off with suggestions to your location. Should you build your new dealership in the nucleus of a town, where you may get more direct 'walk-by' trade but suffer from difficulty with deliveries etc. or should you consider building on the outskirts of town where access may be much easier? It also reminds you to bear in mind that your chosen town will most likely at some point expand, so what was once on the outskirts may end up gridlocked, for example.

> "Correctly planned, correctly built"

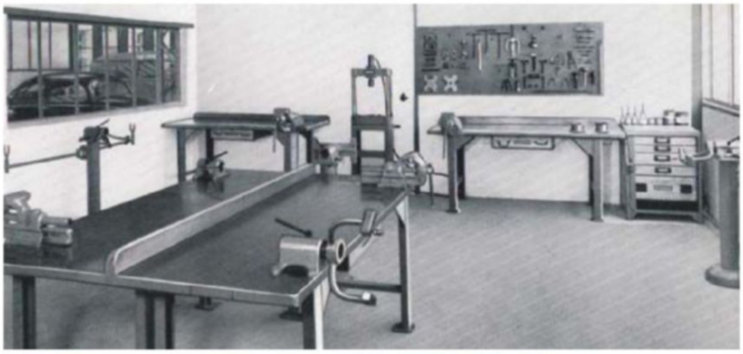
Then on to the selection of your building plot and how you should divide it up, allocating different areas for petrol pumps, car sales, workshops, customer service, parts storage, offices, staff rooms and general parking. It even gives advice as to levels of land and gives specific advice for different site characteristics. If your proposed site is on undulating land, for example, it recommends you put the petrol pumps near the road, with the

ERSATZTEIL

A VW Master Tech explains to this dapper gentleman that his Oval needs an oil change. Nothing more

As this brochure was printed in 1955, the cars in the shots are all from the Oval and Split era. Yummy

How cool is this? VW-approved workshop layout, with bench-mounted and free-standing engine stands, no doubt all at an ergonomic heights

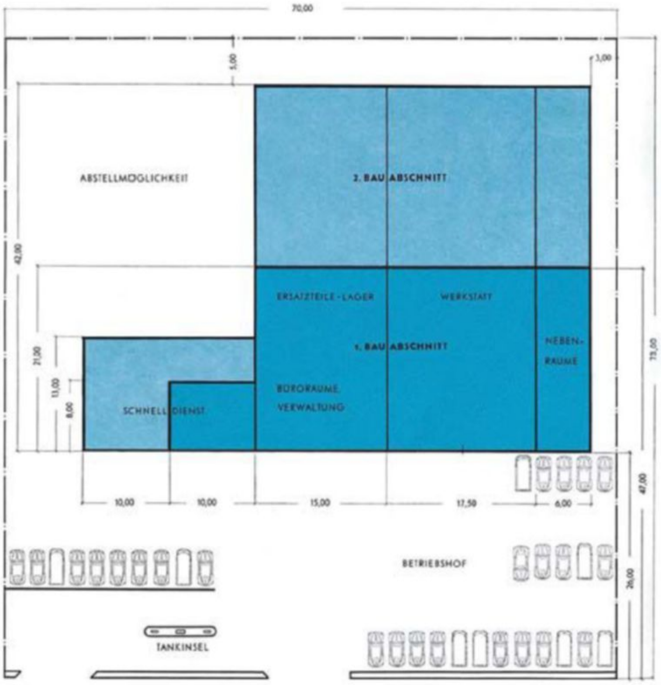


A lady doing the vacuuming wasn't sexist, women made up a high proportion of VW's workforce in the 1950s

Blue overlays over black and white images were common in early VW marketing material

Spot the interloper in this pic

Schematics of suggested layouts for your dealership were incredibly detailed. Note this one even gives sizes for parking spaces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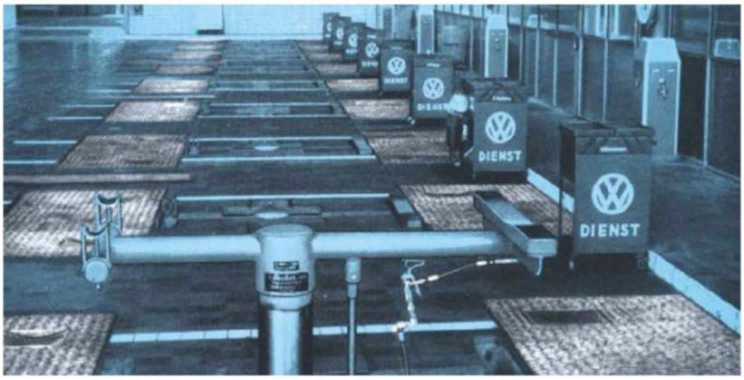
Crazy paving flooring, cane furniture and tapered-leg tables are classic 1950s

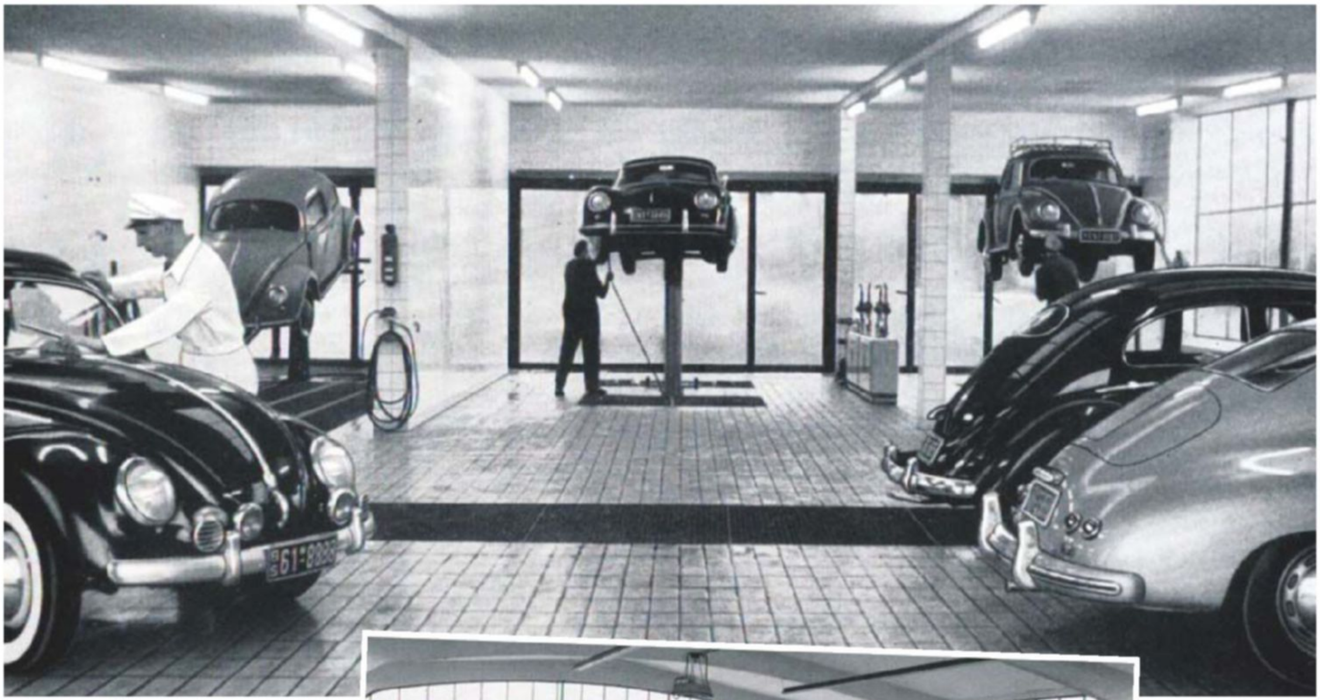
What wouldn't you give for one of these VW-specific lifts in your garage?


DIENST
DIENST

Even the works canteen looks appealing, in a 1950's kind of way

The book doesn't go as far as a planting plan for the flowerbeds, but it's not far off

Another suggestion for a storage place for your VW stock. Love those full-height, steel-framed windows



Note the angled ramp on the left, designed for washing off the underside of cars

Undoubtedly staged for the camera, but note the total lack of personal safety equipment and breathing apparatus in the spray booth. Tut tut VW on that one

Presumably this is a store room rather than a showroom, but we'd kill for a garage like this, especially one filled with NOS 1950's Volkswagens!

new car showroom just behind and the workshop / spares facility up on the next level. It goes into great detail about amenities too, with scale diagrams of incoming pipework and outgoing drainage, from workshop waste to rainwater. Foundations and wall construction detail are equally specific.

A suggested layout for the workshop follows, with recommendations on placement of particular machines and work stations, together with a comprehensive, colour-coded plan for the best through route so your servicing work goes as smoothly and efficiently as possible. All these plans, particularly those in the 'work areas' section, are illustrated with black and white photographs of existing dealerships, with various VWs on show and being worked on. Even some of the types of ramp shown are interesting, including a T-shaped one that takes a Beetle up to about 30 degrees to make it easier to wash the underside and allow the water to run off. If that isn't specific enough, it also gives you various options on flooring and grating, which allow for water to flow away beneath you rather than have your mechanics slosh about, ankle deep in muck.

Nothing is left to chance. There are detailed drawings of roof construction, recommendations for wall and floor tiles, paint colour charts with suggestions as to where you should use them on gates, exterior plaster, advertising hoardings, ceilings and walls, plinths, machinery and equipment.

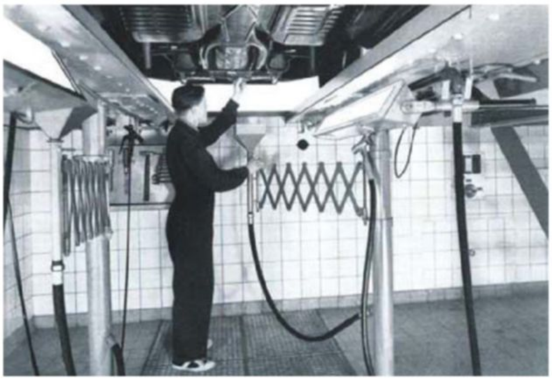
The section on heating and ventilation has details of boiler types and radiators and all manner of vents from blow-air heating to fresh air inlets. Photographs of various types and positions of windows to allow natural light in are equally meticulous. And you thought workplace assessment was a new thing.

> "And you thought workplace assessment was a new thing"

Even the car parks are given the same level of consideration. Hard-standing construction is pictured on one page, with precise cross-sectional illustrations of the various substrates used for four different types of parking area.

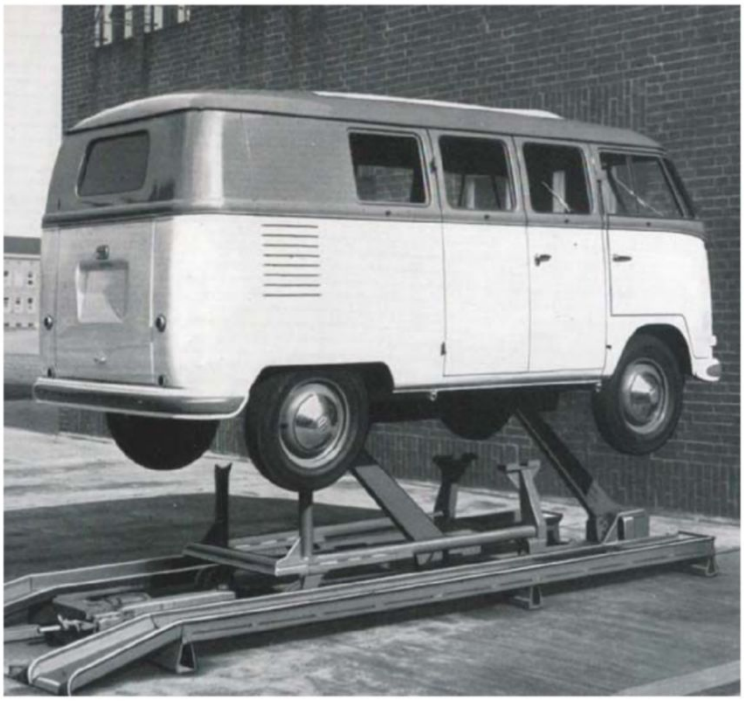
The section on staff rooms and offices has some fantastic photos of mid-century washstands and the pictures of the parts shop has a lovely picture of some 1950's accessories in a smart display case.

Once you've built your dealership, as per the factory recommendations of course, you'll need

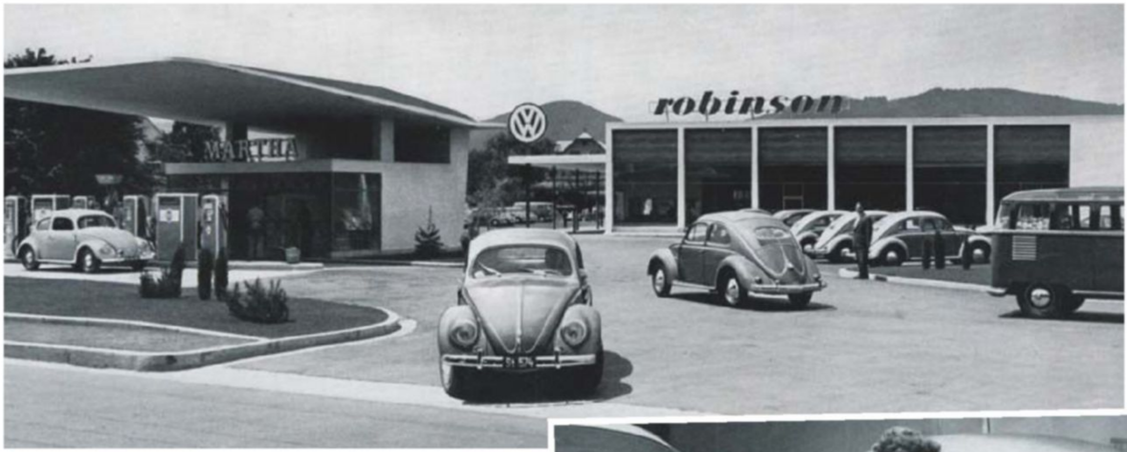


Check out the nifty concertina oil catch funnels for easy, clean, environmentally-friendly oil changes. This was in 1955!

A pit for a Split. But just how clean is this service bay?



Another cool purpose-made, VW-specific lift. Note the formed metal channels so you could only drive on in the right place



Classic mid-century architecture is just wonderful in its simplicity

to equip it, and it'll come as no surprise that just any old box of spanners isn't goint to cut it in your fledgling VW dealership. Instead, you get some fabulous pages on equipping your workshop, with German-made Hazet tools the brand of choice. If you have always hankered after a Hazet tool trolley, you'll go nuts for one of the wall-mounted Hazet tool racks, with a complete set of specialist tools for every job on your customers' VWs, all drawn around so they can be replaced correctly. A place for everything and everything in its place was never more apt.

On the final pages there is a copy of a typical contract for the building consultancy and a schematic of the whole process, from conception through land buying, construction and all the way up to the grand opening.

Naturally, the book being produced in 1955, all the vehicles in the pictures are Splits, Ovals or Barndoor Buses but, if you look closely, there are also some special-bodied VWs, and even a Porsche 356 or two.

Sadly, despite my best efforts, VW have so far been unable to supply any information about how many of these books were printed, how many years they were produced for and whether they were translated into any other languages. I have scoured the web and not yet come across another one, but perhaps you have? If so, we'd love to hear from you. I will sign off by saying a big thank you to Jeffrey from BusOk.nl for selling this book to me in order that I can share it with you all. ■

One of the selling points of the Beetle was their ease of repair after a minor accident. Quick blow-ins were clearly order of the day in 1955

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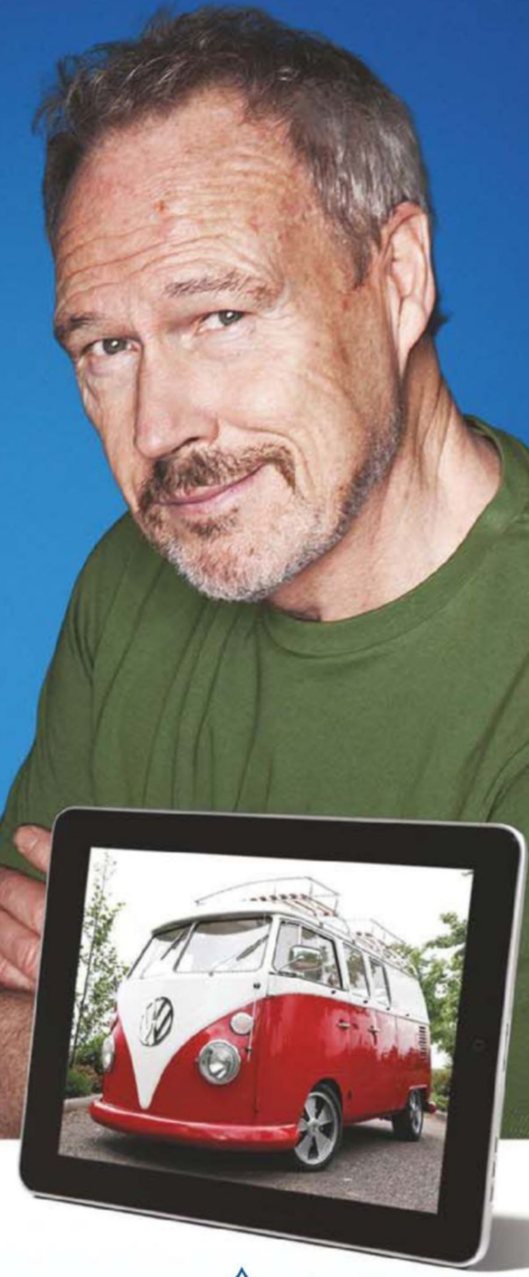

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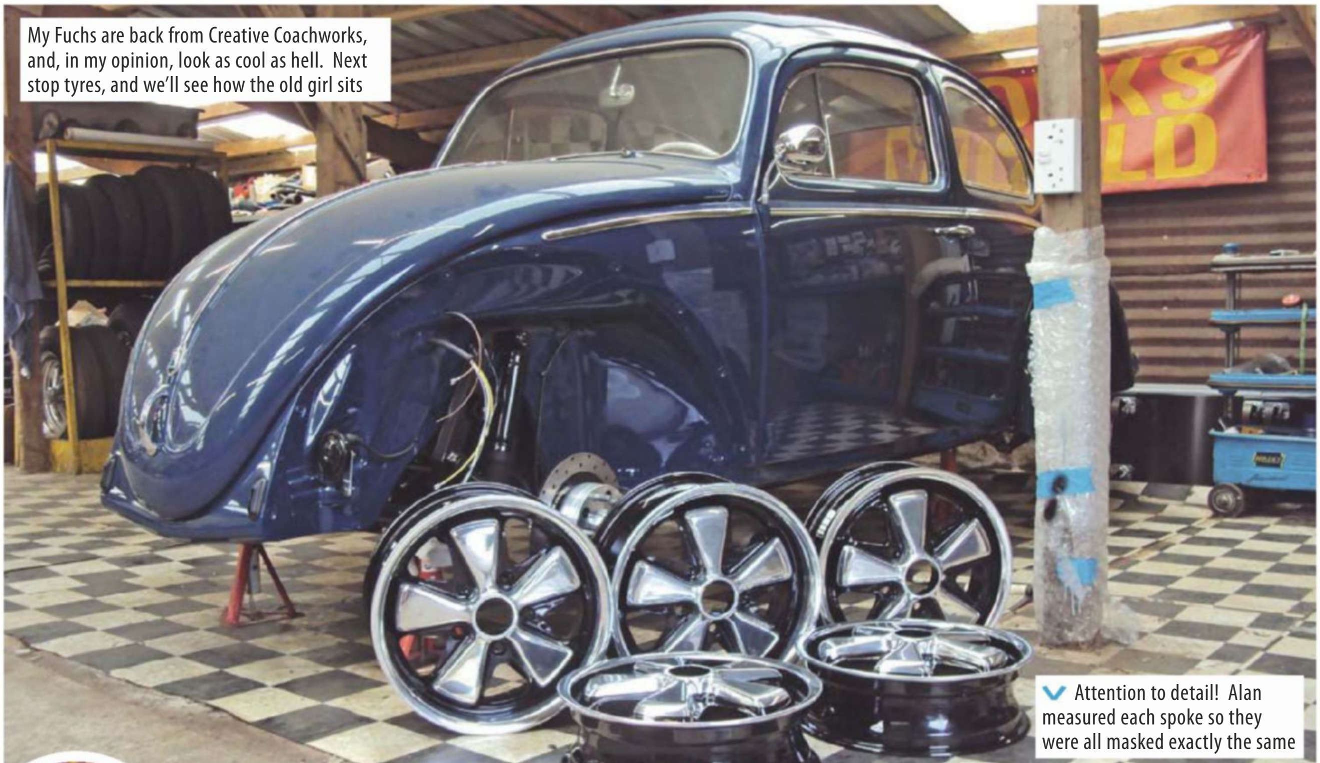

My Fuchs are back from Creative Coachworks, and, in my opinion, look as cool as hell. Next stop tyres, and we'll see how the old girl sits

Attention to detail! Alan measured each spoke so they were all masked exactly the same

OWNER INFO

NAME: Steve Gosling

CAR: '61 ragtop, '67 Ghia

WORK THIS MONTH: Collect wheels, bleed brakes, finish wiring and progress engine

Black and blue

What? More progress on Steve's ragtop!

Firstly, the most exciting thing on the list of steps in the right direction was getting my wheels back from Creative Coachworks. The whole team there have played their part in making them look like this, and a lovely job they've made of them too. The amount of work in these wheels beggars belief, and they were a decent set to begin with. There are hours and hours in polishing them, and hours in masking them, so each spoke is masked exactly the same as every other spoke. As usual, I can't thank Alan enough, I know how much work these take as I polished and detailed them the first time round, but they didn't look this good then.

As for my wheel choice, I can almost hear the groans and cries of 'played out', 'boring' and 'done to death' from here. But here's the thing, I love Fuchs, simple as that. I've had these wheels for over 10 years now, they were previously on my Ghia and, in my opinion, are quite simply the best wheel ever designed. I don't care that now they're re-popped they're on everything, that doesn't change the vision I've had of my car since I started building it. As I've said before, I've got a blue, black and polished thing going on with this car and the wheels are a big part of that.

> "I've got a blue, black and polished thing going on"

Brake time

Next on the list of less interesting jobs was bleeding the brakes – not a big job, but a milestone nonetheless. It passed without incident, and so it should, every single part of the brake system is new. The only reason you're reading about it at all is I wanted to mention brake fluid. A while ago I heard something about non-corrosive brake fluid (by non-corrosive I mean a brake fluid that won't pickle and destroy paint if it accidentally gets spilled). As you can probably appreciate, there is lot of time and money tied up in paint on this car and, quite simply, I can't afford to pay for any of it to be re-done. A quick web search turned up Automec silicone non-corrosive brake fluid on eBay for £39 a litre. I'm not sure if pound for pound it costs more than gold, but damn it's expensive! However, it's not as expensive, or time consuming, as repainting any part of the car, so I stepped up and bought a litre of the stuff. I'm thankful I did too, as I cleverly dripped fluid on the framehead almost straight away. Having, ahem, tested it, I can now confirm it is completely harmless to paint so, as far as I'm concerned, it was money well spent.

And finally, I've finished the wiring. Lots of shortening and lengthening of wires later, I'm pretty pleased with the end result. I chose to run the main loom over the top of the speedo, instead of down the right-hand side, to keep things simple and tidy and I've stuck to my self-

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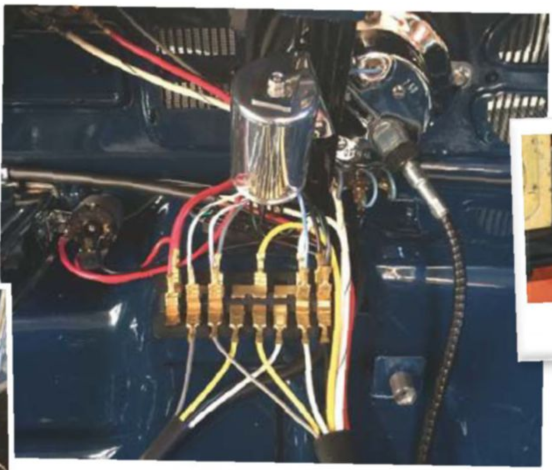
1 Litre

Automec silicone brake fluid has to be the most expensive brake fluid on the market. But it's cheaper than repainting parts after any spills



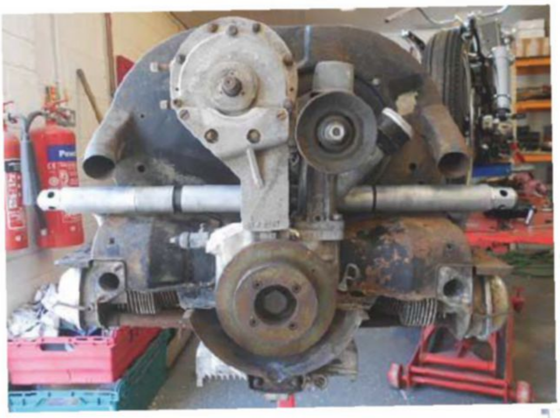
> The wiring is now finished and, for once, I'm genuinely happy with something I've done. I think it's looking pretty cool for what is basically a stock loom

v In an attempt to de-clutter the under-bonnet area, I ran the washer hose and indicator wires inside the stock front wiring conduit. A lot of fiddly work, but it really helps to keep everything visually simple

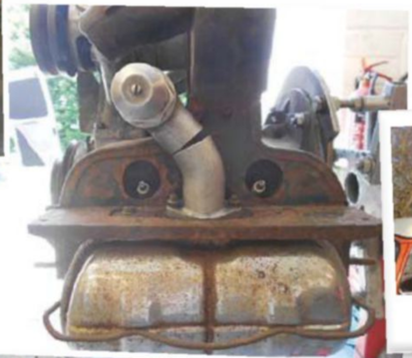
imposed no cable ties rule. It's not super neat and all in straight lines like some, but it still looks factory to me, which is what I wanted, just a bit tidier. Kind of like organised chaos.

Meanwhile, in Norfolk...

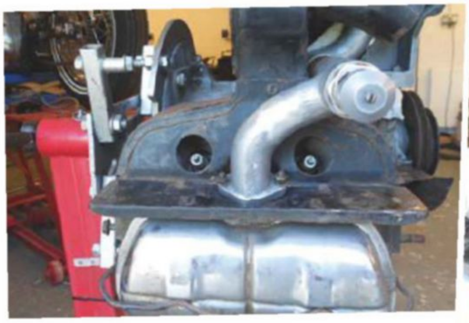
…Mark Dryden and Steve Wadsworth of Flatlands Engineering have been beavering away on my engine. More specifically, they've been working on the Shorrocks supercharger set up, and boy has it been posing them some problems. It's apparently a well engineered bit of kit and sure, the actual supercharger is fantastic and superior to Judsons, Pepcos and the like, but the set up is not without issues. The biggest one, and the main reason it's at Flatlands, is that in stock form there is no way to tension the supercharger belt. That coupled with the fact that to change the fan belt you have to take the supercharger off – not something you could do by the side of the road – meant I needed Mark's engineering expertise to come up with a neat solution. There was also the lack of a throttle linkage to deal with, as well as replacing the oil feed pipe and sorting out the mess that was the inlet manifold (see below). More on sorting out the rest of the supercharger scenario next time. ■

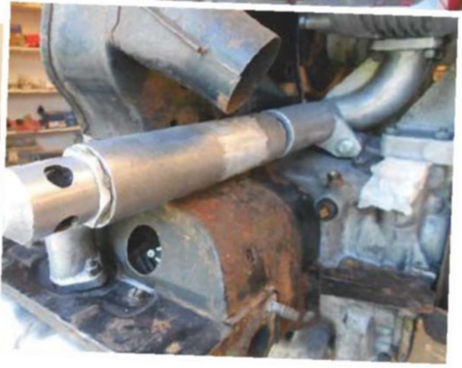


< Originally, the inlet manifold was in three pieces, with two rubber hoses to bridge and seal the gaps. The problem is the two ends weren't in line with the middle piece (they were higher) so sealing the joins effectively wasn't easy. A previous owner had cut my inlet manifold into six pieces to try to solve this, but it still didn't line up and, in the process, they'd introduced three further points where the manifold could leak…



>v …so Mark and Steve started by cutting off the two end pieces so the manifold could sit in line. They then fitted a steel tube through the inside of the manifold (just visible above) to keep everything straight, then cut small wedges of the same dimension ali tube to fill the gaps. The whole lot was then TIG welded back together in three pieces. Essentially, this is how the inlet manifold should have been made in the first place





VOLKS WORLD PROJECT CARS

No more nails

Owner: Cathal O'Toole
Cars: '77 Cal Look Beetle, GT Beetle and '73 Riviera Camper
This month: Slow and steady progress on the Cal Looker. A new passenger side heater channel and door pillar are in place for trial fitting

Owner: Ivan McCutcheon
Cars: '67 Beetle
This month: The chaps in the office think the pulley on my engine has been photoshopped to look like it's running, but it is

Pulley my leg

Moving on?

Owner: Jon Pratt
Cars: '70 Bay
This month: Ok... Would anyone (seriously) be keen to give me £13.5k ONO for this? Thinking about selling my '70 RHD Dormobile to buy a Beetle

Owner: Mark Walker
Car: '68 Beetle
This month: I moved project sunroof into winter storage so I can start tidying up some old paint repairs. First order of business will be to remove the front wings and see what's going on…

Wing dings

Tip top pop top

Owner: Gordie Woollacott
Car: '78 Westy
This month: Pop top canvas - done and dusted! Not difficult, just time consuming and fiddly but certainly worth the extra £££ on decent material

Owner: Steve Parsons
Car: '60 Split
This month: It's time to start work on the Bus. First job is to work out how much rot there is and order some repair panels. More on this next month

Can of worms, opened

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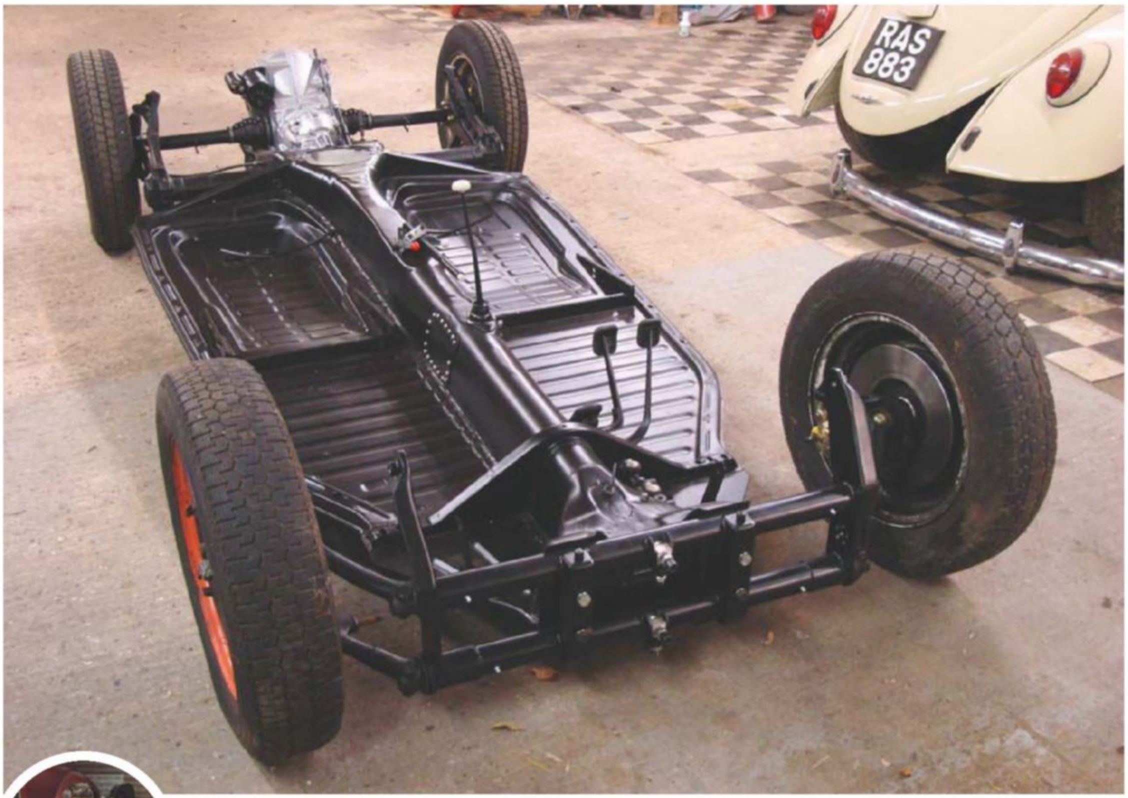


To say I'm tickled to death would be an understatement. That's a milestone moment right there

OWNER INFO

NAME: James Peene

JOB: Editor

CAR: '66 1300 sunroof Beetle

WORK THIS MONTH: I only went and got my floorpan rolling on four wheels again, didn't I? Well, I say 'I' but there's no I in team is there? I had loads of help from the *VolksWorld* elves

They see me rollin'

It's only taken him two years to get to this point, but James' '66 is finally back on four wheels again. Let the good times roll

"You were on a bit of a mission last night, weren't you?" The words of Mike Pye, not my own, but never was a truer word said, because having finally got all my ducks in a row, there was no way I was leaving the garage last time out without getting the 'pan off its axle stands. Well, okay, I would have done if I'd absolutely had to, but I *really* wanted to get the chassis rolling on its own four wheels again, and I've only finally gone and done it.

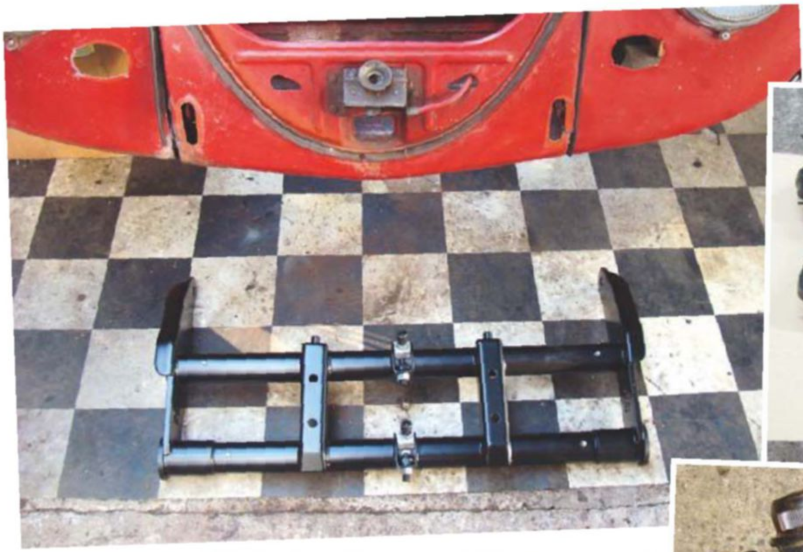
Truth be told, I'd built up bolting the wheels back on into a real landmark occasion. For me, it represented a milestone in the project and I didn't want to move on to the next stage of fixing the body until I'd ticked it off the list.

I know it sounds ridiculous but, in my head, I've broken the entire project down into four, admittedly rather sizeable chunks. In order of how I plan to tackle them, they are floorpan, body, engine, interior. I've already written off the last one as, let's face it, the interior can wait until the car's back together and being driven, so now (in my head) I've got just two chunks left.

Whilst waiting for parts, I decided to pull the wings off and remove all the old underseal. It was dirty, but strangely satisfying work

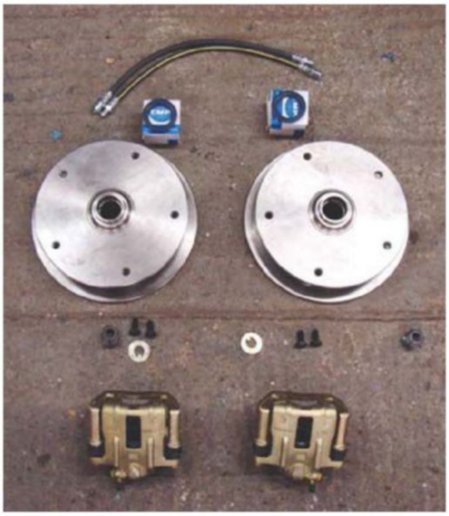
> "Lawrence's solution? Hit them harder"

Anyone who's been keeping tabs on my progress will know how painfully slow its been, and I've no one to blame but myself. Take my new long-travel balljoints, for example. I could have taken them to a local garage and paid someone the going rate to press them into the arms, but that's not my style, so I didn't. Instead, I gave them to Lawrence Butcher as he said he could sort them for me on the cheap, but the press he was planning to use broke. No biggy, he had another friend who might be able to help, but he's a busy boy and it took a while for them to come back to me after his other contact couldn't do them either. In fact, they went all the way to Le Mans with him, still in the box he collected them in.



Aire Valley Speed Shop beam is a thing of loveliness. Gussetted towers for air shocks, too

My long-travel balljoints have been a long time travelling, so now have a whopper of a carbon footprint!



If they're half as good as the amount they weigh, my EMPI disc brake kit will be a winner

In this shot the 'pan is wearing a skidplate, but it had to come off for now as it fouls on the bottom adjuster bolt

Jimbo Wallace then stepped up to the plate, but he also ran into problems. Long story short, they took a while to do. The moral of the story? Sometimes it's better to just pony up and pay someone to get the job done.

So, when Mr. Wallace brought my torsion arms back all done and ready to go, I wasted no time in fitting them to the beam. Ah yes, the beam. I'm hugely impressed with the quality of the beam Aire Valley made for me, and with the narrowed leaves taking up residence inside it, the torsion arms slid straight in, and the dropped spindles went straight on. I say went straight on but, because I'd 'misplaced' one or two fastenings / washers, Steve had to find me some suitable replacements from his stash of rusty gold. Then they went straight on.

Don't tickle it…

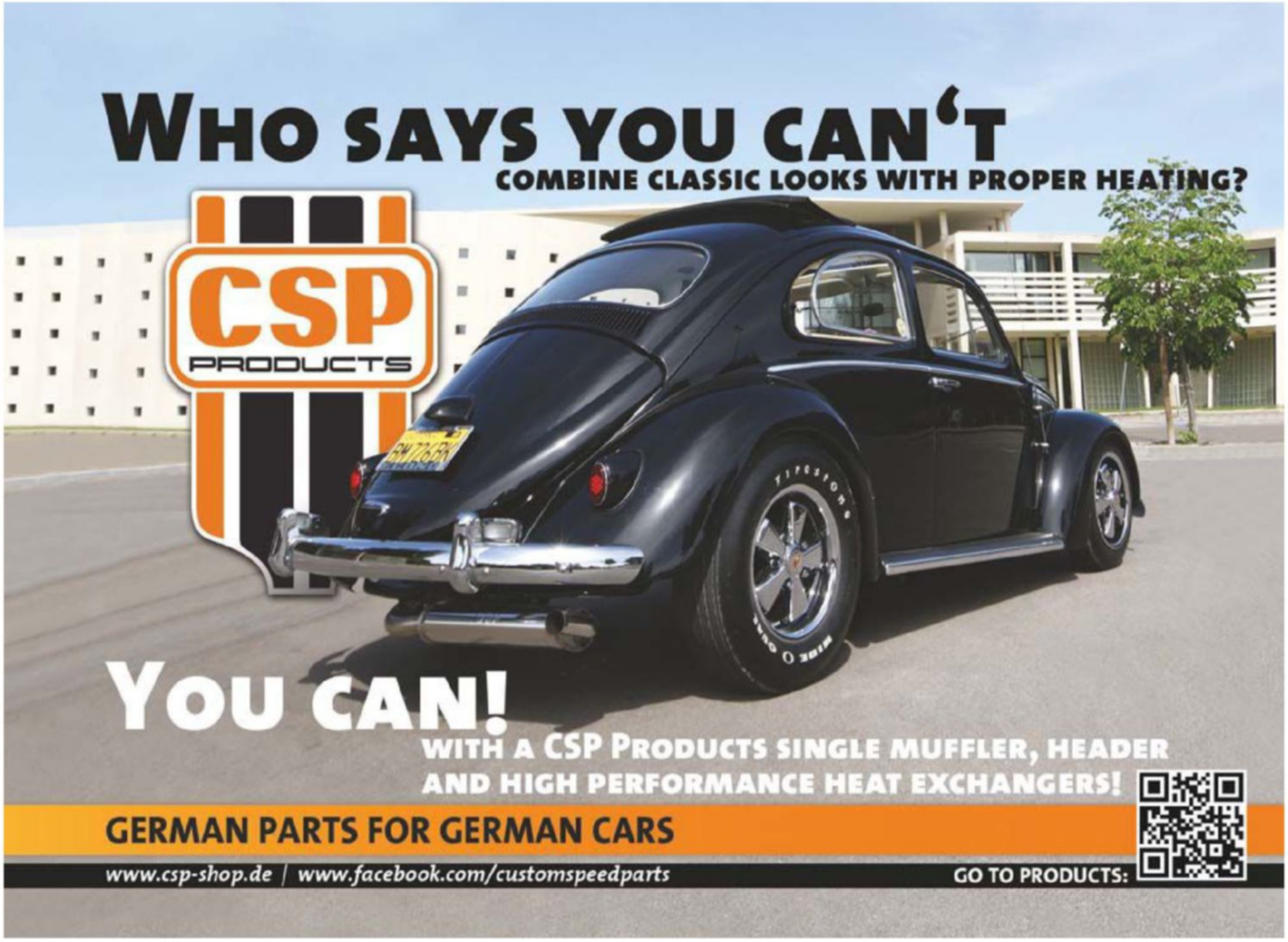
All this transpired one evening after work in the company of Steve, Mike and Lawrence. Mike even brought his handy bearing fitting tool along so I could hammer the new bearing shells into the EMPI disc brakes I've had in stock for the last two years. But even with this, I found them a bugger to get in straight. Lawrence's solution? Hit them harder. Which I did, and they went in in the end.

With the bearings thoroughly greased and the calipers ready to go (thanks for your help with the assembly LB) the rest of the front end came together nicely. The only issue I've identified is with the skidplate I've bought to protect the framehead. When I came to bolt it up, I discovered it only fitted if the adjuster was set to full height (which just won't do), so I'll need to cut down the bottom bolt before it goes back on. That job, however, can wait until the car is back together and I'm ready to dial the height in. Obviously, before the 'pan came off the jack Steve set the height at its lowest setting, so that's where the chassis settled – nice and low.

Actually, I'd go so far to say that it's sitting at pretty much the height I want it to when it's all back together, with enough clearance so that hopefully nothing bumps, scrapes or does anything to nause up all my hard work.

And there she rolls. Two years since I busted the whole shooting match apart, and looking pretty swanky, even if I do say so myself. The only disappointment on the big night was I had to throw the old steels on rather than the BRM replicas I've got for the car. The wrong wheel bolts scuppered that, but they'll be here soon enough. More another time. ■

Insert 'vroom vroom' noises for the full effect. Obviously, the driver's seat will need a touch of adjustment…



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On the right track

Steering feeling vague, or are you experiencing an odd clunking noise? It could be a track rod end has expired

Words and photos Matt Keene

Track rod ends form a vital part of your VW's steering mechanism. They ensure a smooth transfer of steering input from the steering box, which is located on the front axle beam, to the stub axles and wheels. Whilst they are robust items, it's not uncommon for them to fail from time to time, and when they do they will need replacing. Their construction is simple – essentially a threaded ball-socket held within a steel cup – but they are prone to moisture ingress with age, particularly if their protective rubber boot perishes. Even small amounts of water ingress can cause a gradual 'washing out' of the lubricating grease, and this ultimately leads to metal-to-metal contact and rapid component wear.

When a track rod end starts to go 'dry', wear will show itself in the form of play in the joint, which will be felt in the steering. Any such play will result in a dangerous driving condition and will lead to an eventual MoT failure.

Diagnosing a faulty track rod end is fairly simple. Generally speaking, you should be able to feel any play in the steering as you drive. Going over bumps and potholes will accentuate it, and it is normally accompanied by an audible clunking noise.

Tracing the source of the clunking noise is also relatively straightforward, but it requires jacking the vehicle up and securing it on axle stands. Once the vehicle is secured, grab hold of a road wheel and wiggle it side to side with a short, sharp motion. If there is any play here, it will immediately be felt. Tracing the origin of the play will require a second pair of hands to do the wiggling for you whilst you inspect all four of the steering joints. As track rod ends cannot be rebuilt, the only option is to replace them, but be aware that early ones had integral grease nipples and exact replacements are not available new. ■

01 After locating your grumbling track rod end (see introduction for extra info) it's time to jack the vehicle up and secure it on axle stands. Remember to loosen your wheel nuts a little prior to jacking up, particularly if they are stubborn

JOB INFO

TOOLS NEEDED: Trolley jack, axle stands, 19mm socket and breaker bar, torque wrench, 13 and 14mm socket, ratchet and extension bar, vice grips, 13 and 14mm spanners, balljoint breaker, tyre pressure gauge, tracking gauges

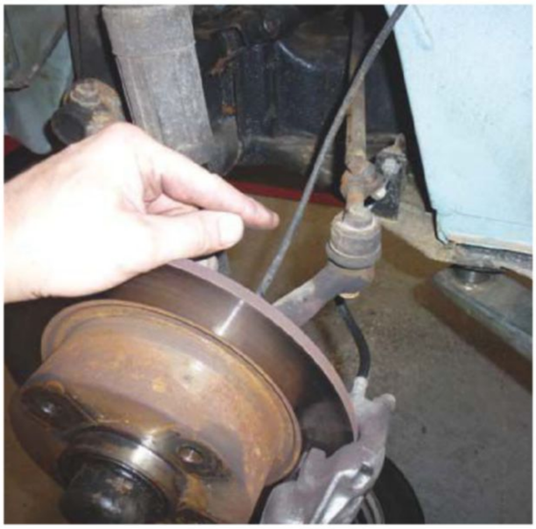
MATERIALS USED: Track rod end (approx £9) Copper Slip anti-seize compound, penetrating oil (WD40 or similar).

TIME TAKEN: 1-2 hours

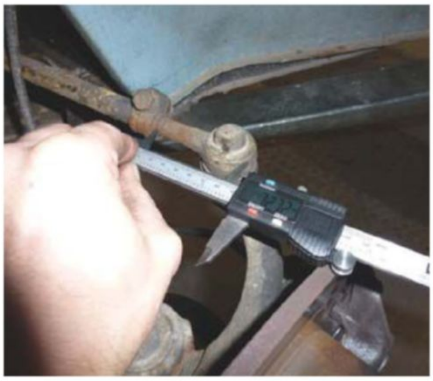
COST DIY: £9

PRO: Approximately £50 for parts and labour

02 With the road wheel off, access to the steering components is vastly improved. Double check the source of play by wiggling the steering. You should be able to easily see movement in a worn joint

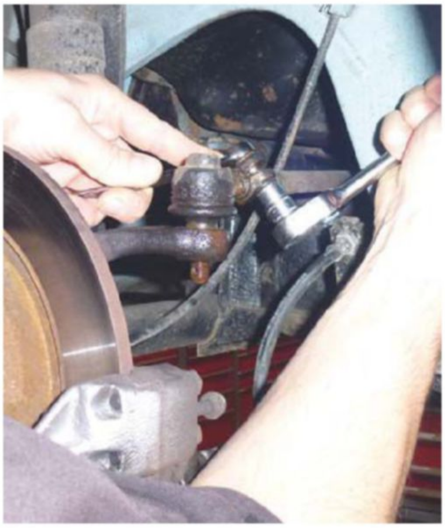


03 Fortunately, the source of steering play on this Bug was the nearside outer track rod end. Access to the inner track rod ends is limited, and generally requires the removal of the petrol tank. Factor this in if you are dealing with a worn inner track rod end



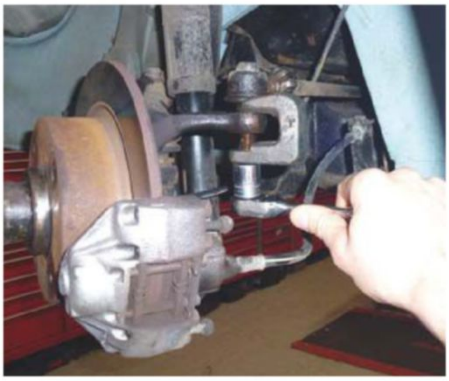
04 Before loosening or removing the offending track rod end, take a measurement of its total length protruding from the track rod itself. This will help you keep the vehicle's tracking settings not far off the mark

05 It may be worth soaking the retaining nut in penetrating oil before trying to loosen it. Years of grime and road salt tends to seize them up a little, or a lot

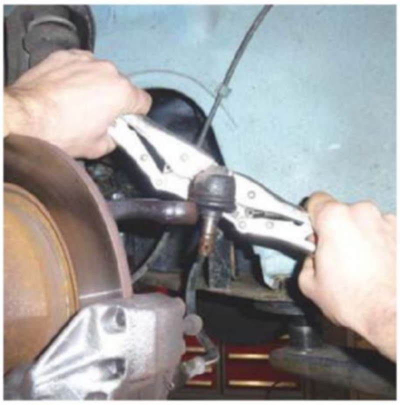


06 The track rod end is secured to the track rod via a pinch bolt. Again, soak this in penetrating oil then remove it

07 Removing the track rod end itself from the stub axle can be tricky. To make life easier, apply penetrating oil between the rubber boot and the spindle

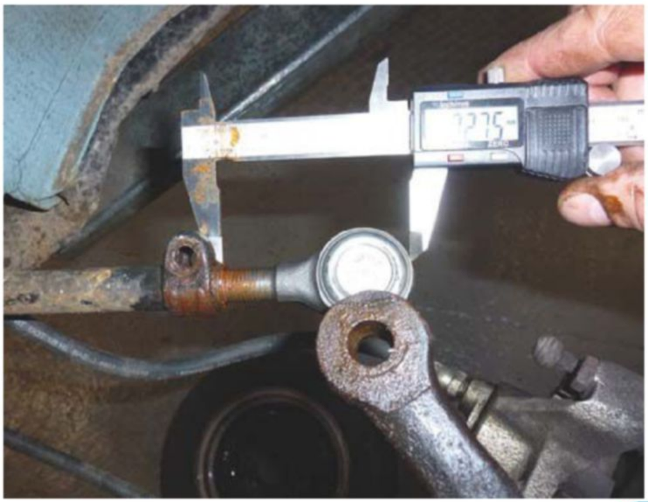


08 As the track rod end is a taper fit into the stub axle, even with the locking nut removed, a lot of force is required to separate them. The best method is to use the correct tool for the job – a balljoint breaker



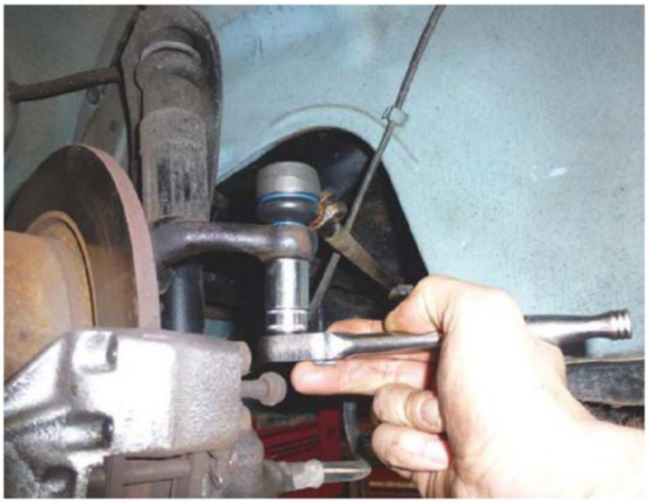
09 Removing the track rod end from the track rod might also prove difficult as it's likely to be partially seized through time. Two sets of vice grips will usually do the job. Take note of whether it is left-hand or right-hand threaded and order the appropriate replacement part

10 Before fitting your new track rod end, check it against the one you have removed and, once you are happy it is an adequate replacement, lubricated the threads with an anti-seize compound such as Copper Slip

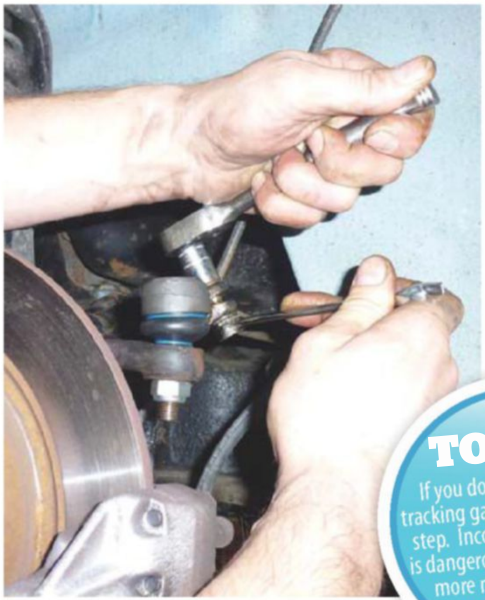


11 Screw the new track rod end in to the same measurement as you took from the old one. This will ensure your vehicle's tracking is not wildly out

HOW TO
Track rod end replacement



12 Tighten up the new track rod end where it meets the stub axle. Ensure you use a new Nyloc-type locking nut, or an original 'castle'-shaped nut with a new split pin



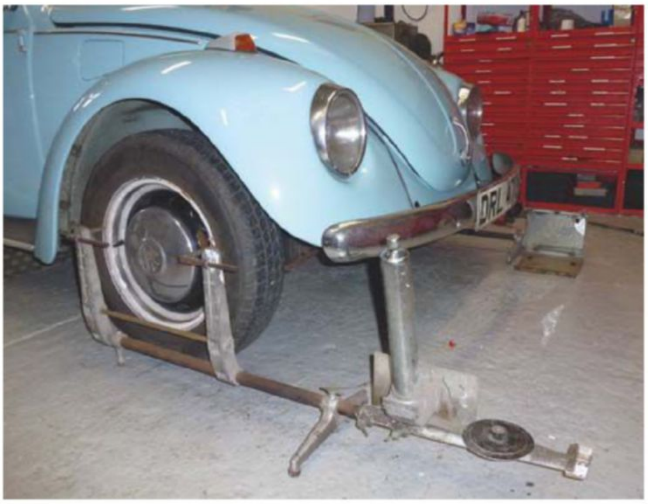
13 Lock the track rod end in the track rod with the pinch bolt system, ensuring you use a new self-locking nut

TOP TIP

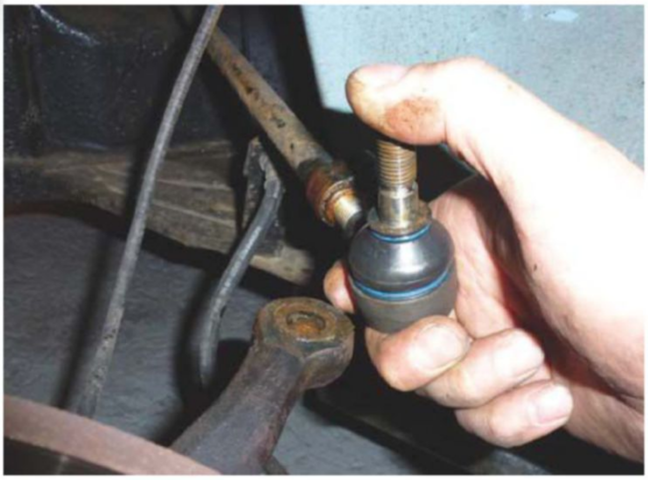
If you don't have access to tracking gauges, don't skip this step. Incorrectly set tracking is dangerous and will cost you more money in the long run. Go and see a professional

14 Re-fit the road wheel and torque to spec. Lower the car back down to the floor and move it back and forth a few times to settle the suspension

15 Check the tyre pressures are correct and adjust if necessary. This is an important part of checking your vehicle's geometry



16 If you have access to a set of tracking gauges, you can now check your Bug's tracking is within specification. For a standard 1970's Beetle like this, toe in should be half a degree



17 Tracking (toe in and toe out) is adjusted by loosening both track rod ends on a track rod and turning the rod itself either clockwise or counter-clockwise. As one track rod end is left-hand threaded and other right-hand threaded, turning the rod between the two will either lengthen or shorten its effective length respectively, and therefore alter the vehicle's toe in or toe out. However, as I had only disturbed one track rod end, I was able to set the tracking correctly by dismantling and turning just the outer track rod end as depicted here

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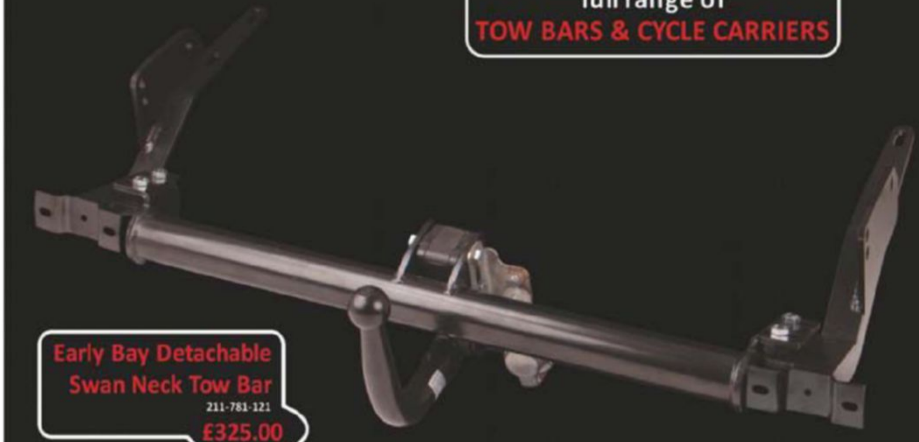

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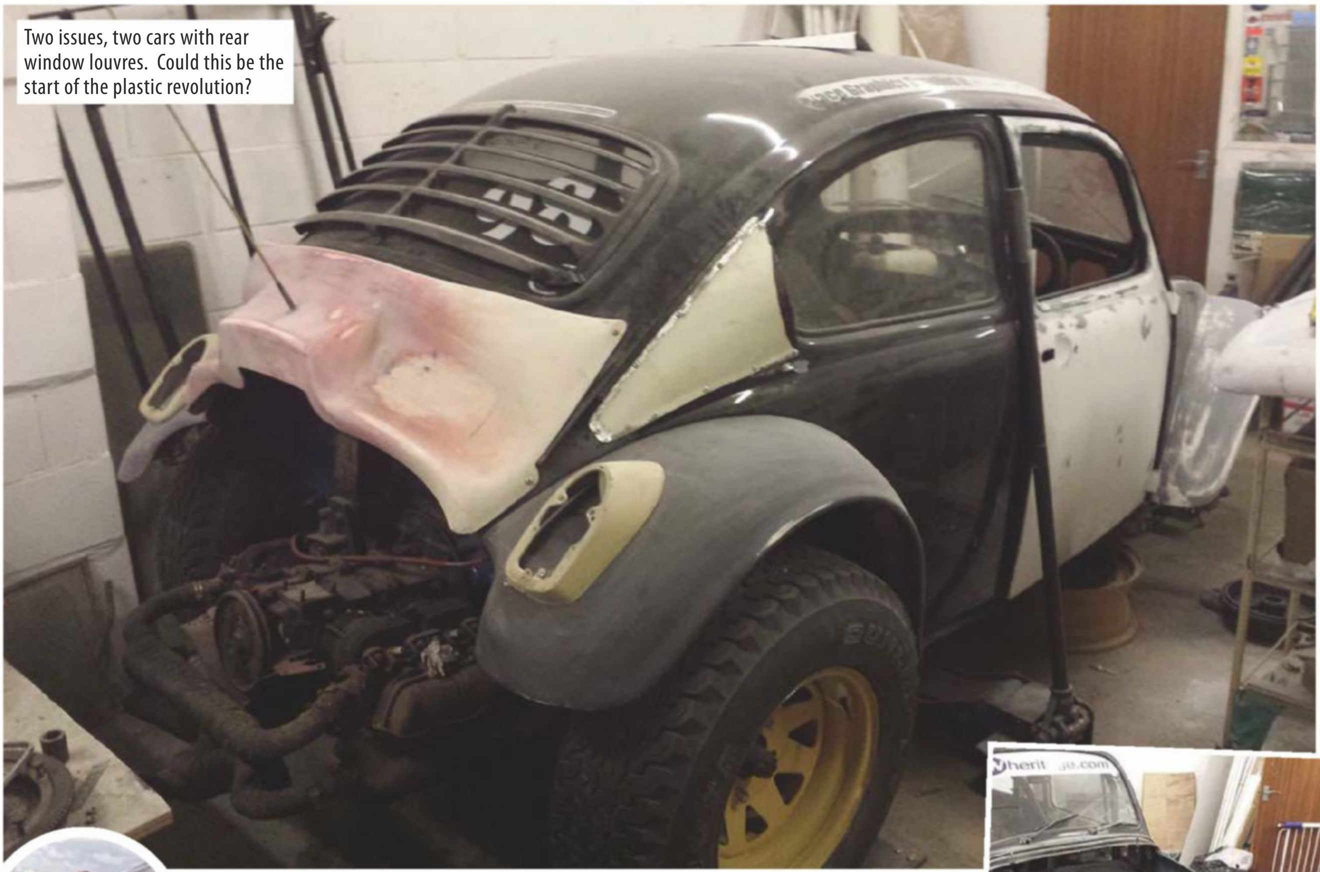


Two issues, two cars with rear window louvres. Could this be the start of the plastic revolution?

OWNER INFO

NAMES: Sam Jeffery, Ian Garden and Mark Hook

CAR: '72 Beetle

WORK THIS MONTH: Continue sourcing parts and make and fit a Baja kit

Cut to the quick

There's no time wasted at Aquaphobics HQ, the charity Baja is coming on in leaps and bounds

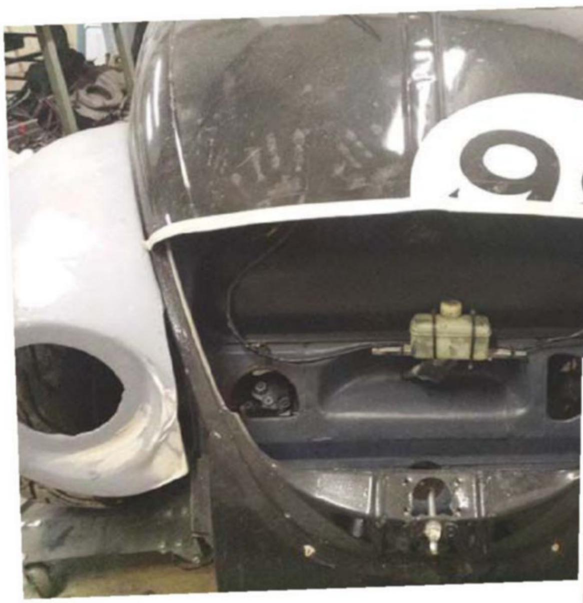
Hi! If you missed the first instalment, we are Team Aquaphobics Baja - Sam Jeffery, Ian Garden and Mark Hook, and we are doing the Scumrun 2015. We have to do 3,000 miles in four days in the Baja we are building. With your help, we plan to raise a lot of money. This year's charity has now been decided, and it's JDRF UK (Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation), a charity funding research into type 1 diabetes in children in this country. As it's a research charity, every penny we raise will go toward vital work that will help children with this condition. Diabetes is one of those conditions that is so common everybody seems to know someone affected by it, but this disease is no joke. Ian's daughter is one of the unlucky ones so, by complete coincidence, the Scumrun have chosen a charity very close to our hearts.

So, the Baja has been coming on nicely in recent weeks, and you may have sneaked a peek at Brighton Breeze where, despite dreadful weather, we raised £145. We have all been scanning eBay and autojumbles for parts here and there, but most of all we have been overwhelmed by the support we have received from different VW-related companies. So far, VW Heritage, Just Kampers and Mega-Bug have each given us a shopping spree, and we now have loads of lovely new parts for the engine, brakes and suspension, as well as a complete pair of secondhand doors from Mega-Bug. Steve Strong Engines has kindly given us a reconditioned engine, Butty's Bits and 73 Aircooled have given us some of their goodies, including a full set of wheel spacers and bolts to give our Baja a wider, meaner stance. Neil from Lite-Steer is still slogging away building our bumpers, rollbars and side rails. Tim at Early VW has kindly donated some gauges so we can keep a check on everything and, of course, the VWorks workshop has become Baja HQ, with many late nights worked and much pizza consumed recently.

> "We have been overwhelmed by the support we've received from VW-related companies"

Early stages of Baja construction are a bit brutal, but you can certainly see some results!

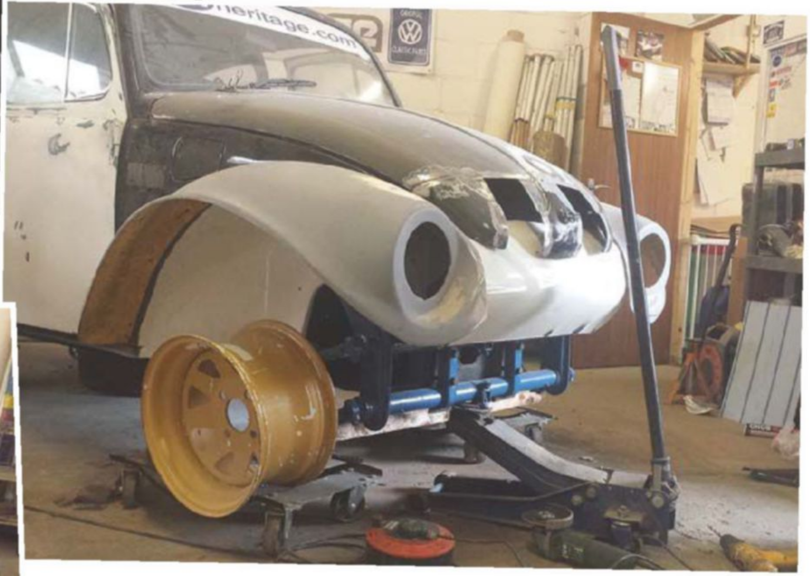
Rather than buy a regular Baja kit and plonk it on a Beetle, we planned to do a lot of old school metal fabrication, but when a set of wings came up very cheap on eBay buying them was a bit of a no brainer. It turned out the seller had a set of suitable off-road tyres as well, so we grabbed those too, although what was meant to be a quick late-night jaunt up to Essex turned into a five-hour round trip, thanks to traffic at the Dartford

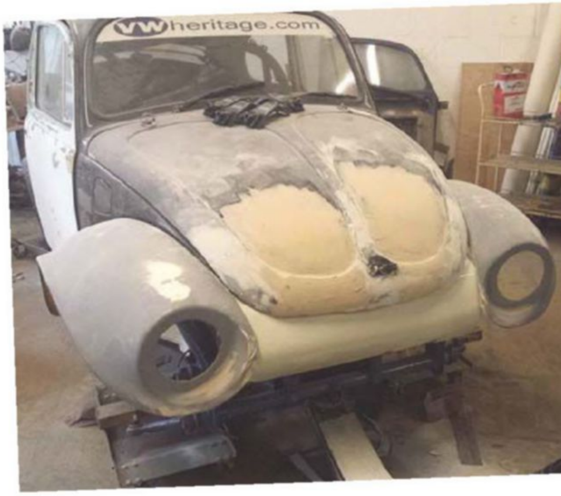


^ No turning back now. Rather than use a proprietory Baja Bug glass fibre bonnet, we cut the original steel one in two…

^ …then cut the bit that we cut off into three…

v …then started to weld it back together again, just a little shorter than it was originally. That front valance was once a T4 window panel!





^ A couple of filler pieces, a skim of body filler and hey presto, one abbreviated Baja bonnet, all for the price of an afternoon's work

> “The piece of ex-T4 Panel Van was the perfect size for the Baja front valance”

crossing and the clutch starting to self-destruct on my Golf!

The rear engine cover was far easier to locate as it was posted to us, so then it was only the front end and bonnet that needed modifying. I (Sam) attacked the front end with an angle grinder and, having minutes before cut some windows into a T4 Panel Van, I realised the piece of ex-Panel Van was the perfect size for the Baja front valance, so out came the welder! The bonnet took a little more thinking about, but someone on an American Baja facebook page had just posted a step-by-step 'how to', so out came the angle grinder again and we are very happy with the outcome.

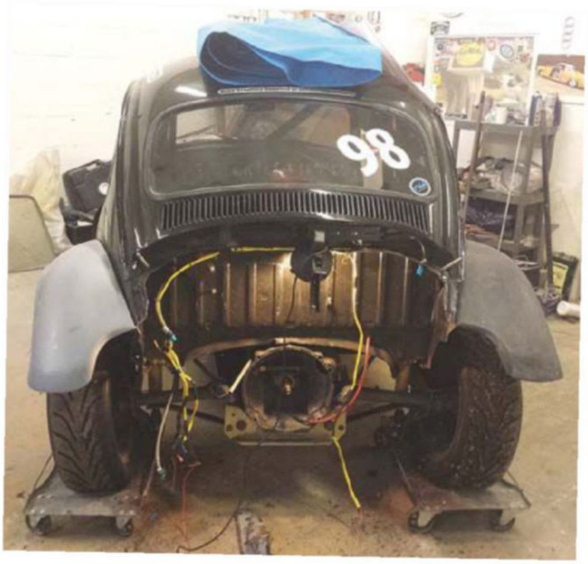
At the rear, both inner wings, the whole rear valance and engine side trays were removed to open up the engine bay and give it the classic Baja look. We fitted the glass fibre engine cover and, using some more bits of T4 window panel, made up some air scoops to help cooling (who am I kidding? It's because they look awesome).

As much as all this has been fun, the main reason we are building the Baja is to do a charity rally, and we need your help to raise as much money as possible. This can be done in a few ways. If you go to our facebook page – Team Aquaphobics Baja – you will find updates and all of our contact information, including how you can donate some money to this worthy cause. Our website is www.teamaquabaja.webs.com. Or the easiest way of all, which literally takes seconds, is to text BAJA98 £1 (or £2, £3, £4, £5 or £10) to 70070. Job done.

Every penny donated goes through our just giving page, which is directly linked to the charity itself. The car, parts, petrol, ferry and everything to do with the rally will be funded entirely by us and the sponsors, not by any money you may choose to donate.

Next month we will look at how we prepped and painted the 'shell to make it ready for Full Circle Race Design to work his magic with a custom wrap, as well as raising the suspension for extra ground clearance. Then we really need to make a start on the mechanical side of things.

If you have any fundraising ideas, or any old parts you no longer want that we can sell off to raise a bit more cash, all donations will be gratefully received. ■



^ In traditional Baja Bug style, the rear end of the car was cut off aft of the bulkhead, and a pair of widened glass fibre wings fitted

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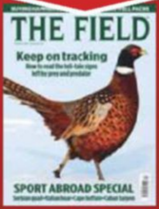

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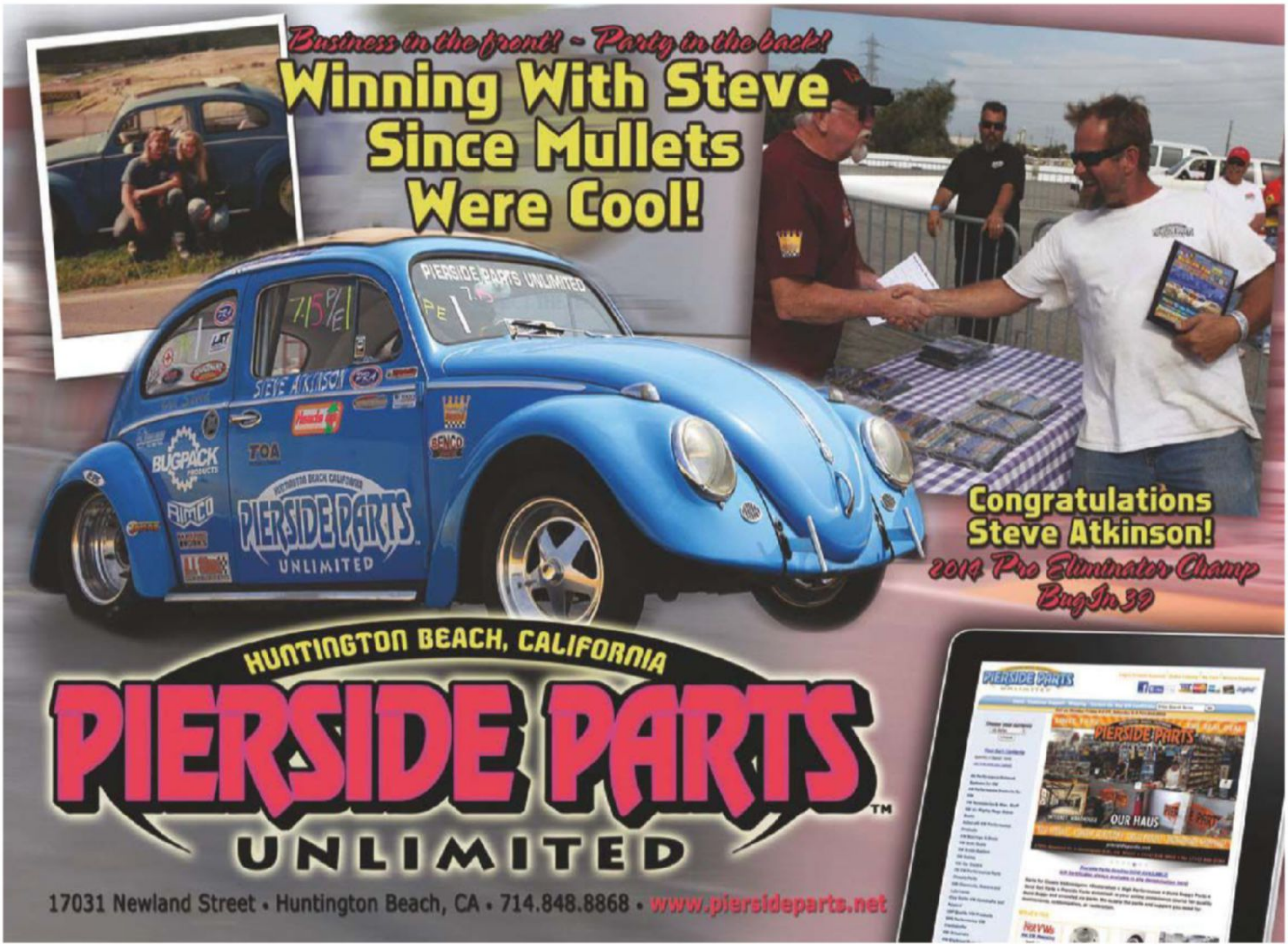

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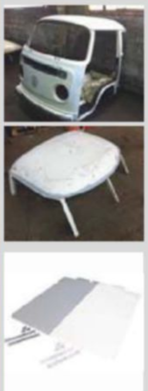

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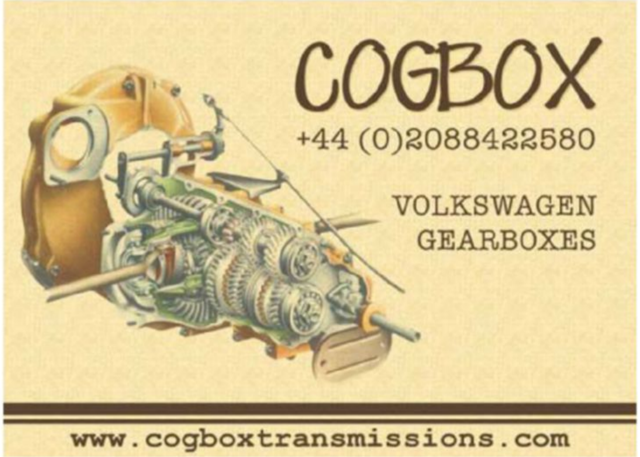

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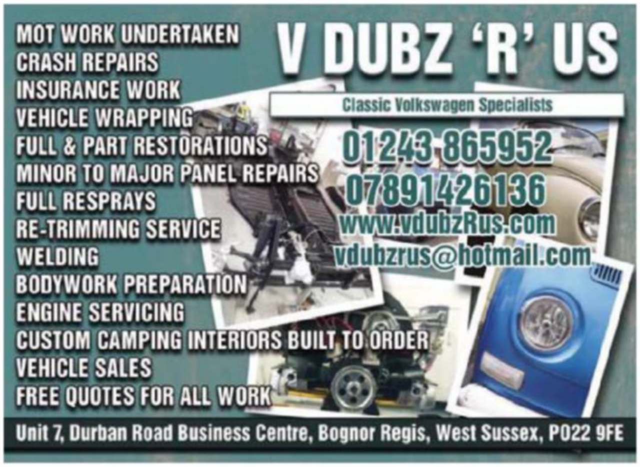
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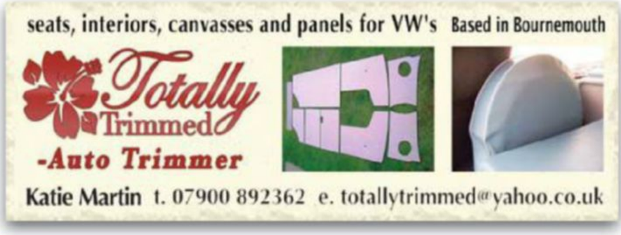
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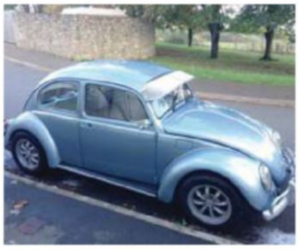
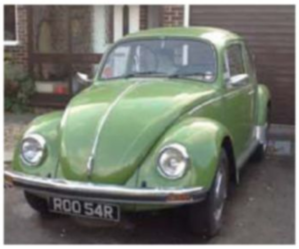
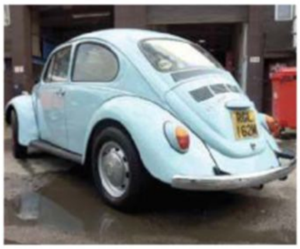
Beetles



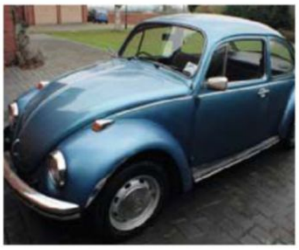
VOLKSWAGEN 1600 BEETLE 1969
With New Reconditioned 1600 Engine & Dual Webber 34 Carbs only done 200 miles. Front Disc Brakes with new pads, Original seats, 12 months MOT, Tax Free. I've owned this car for 13 years and will be sad to see it go, reason for sale is because I now own a VW Split screen and don't have the time to use both. I've changed the wings, boot lid and bonnet to pre 67 style as you can see in the pictures. The car is solid with no rust in the usual places like in the spare wheel well and heater channels, both these areas were fixed and replaced with new parts. The car was re-sprayed 5 years ago and the paint work is still in good condition. £4200, Southern England, Tel : 07843692926, mikehutton84@hotmail.com



VW Beetle 1200
First registered Oct 1976. MOT June 2015 Bespoke quality interior. Solid example of a increasingly rare classic. Number plate valued at £500. Extensive paper history including original service book and resto photographs. £3000 ono,Eastern England,Tel: 01473 327108 five.fergusons@btinternet.com

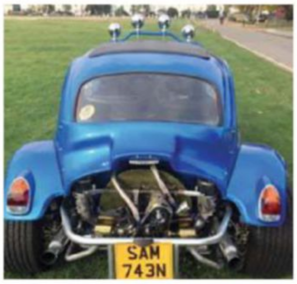


VW Beetle 1973
Beetle has been completely restored by V DUB RESTO at a cost of £7000 plus. Invoice and bank transfers available. Restoration progress available to view on V DUB RESTO web site, Projects, page 9 (Beetle 1974). Garaged since restoration in 2012, Mileage: 11500, £5000, Western England, Tel: 07948393456, richardpuchowski@live.co.uk



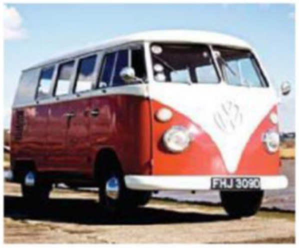
1973, VW-1300 Beetle: MAE
Original metallic blue, fair condition for age, needs new wing and carburettor cleaning etc. Needs some TLC. M.O.T Feb 2015. Tax exempt! £1900 ONO. Mileage: 70271, £1900 Midlands, Tel:01283520088, neale.mcdraft@hotmail.co.uk

Bajas & Buggies

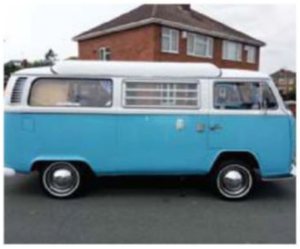


Baja bug award winner
"The UK's Best Street Legal Baja"(Ultra VW December 2012). 1974 Beetle conversion, restoration costs have been £50,000+!1641cc engine with Eagle C25 camshaft and dual Dellorto carbs. Gold metal flake and Candy Blue paint - general spec is unbelievable.
Mileage: 23739, £25,000, London, Tel: 02082931161, nic.higgins@rocketmail.com

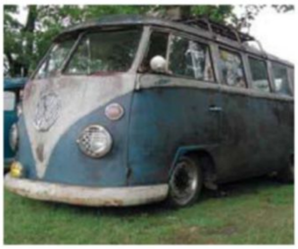
Camper & Vans



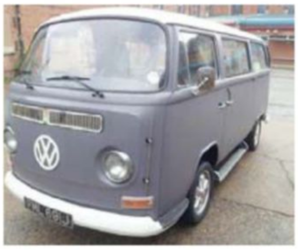
VW SPLITSCREEN CAMPERVAN 1966 LHD
Along with the original 1966 owners spares box is the original paperwork pouch and two copies of the original ignition/door key. Inventory: Aluminium black-out blinds for all windows 3 Bow Stainless Steel Roof Rack and Ladder Canvas Awning Two copies of the original ignition/door key. Original paperwork pouch Original owners spares box Fire extinguisher Blaupunkt radio iPhone/iPod dash mount 2 hob, grill Propane bottle Camping tables and chairs Full cutlery set Plates, bowls etc Saucepans and frying pan 240V hook-up 12V battery (for interior lights/radio) 240V mains sockets 240 to 12 volt converter for… 12V Fridge Rock n roll bed (full width) UK style rear indicator lenses (US style currently fitted) Serious enquiries only, no time wasters please. Can arrange shipping. Mileage: 87898, £9,300, Midlands
Tel: 01133280437, arthurjamesmccann@gmail.com



VW 72 bay
I have owned this bus for 8 years in the last 2 years it has had new sills outriggers jacking points chassis legs outer arches lower front panel all welding done van wurks interior just fitted porsche tomestone whick have been reupholstered also had a recon engine fitted before i bought it still low miles very good van more pics and info just ask, Mileage: 30,000 £13k, Northern England, Tel: 07883081696 neildavies33@hotmail.co.uk



1966 vw microbus
1835cc, twin 40 dellorto carbs, electronic ignition, csp python exhaust system, 12v, rock'n'roll bed, leisure battery, £16,000, Southern England, Tel: 07736227637, lukeashby@msn.com, £3,450 ONO. Tel: (01992) 522216. (Essex)



VW UK rhd Danbury 1971 early bay window camper 12
1971 Danbury tintop uk rhd camper for sale. Full mot, fully rebuilt 1776 engine, original Italian weber carburetor, new Pertronix flamethrower svda dizzy with electronic ignition, new beru blue coil. Petrol tank has been treated with slosh with new fuel lines, new Bosch battery, Porsche half leather tombstone seats, new rock n roll bed which cost £300, I fitted a double door unit with wortop, new ssp fuchs polished alloys with new tyres (original wheels with very good tyres inc in sale), engine bay all freshly painted in dove blue when engine was out, I had a brand new vw heritage german quality cargo floor fitted, exterior is in grey primer and needs minimal prep before painting (or you can use as is if you like?) Eddie is a very solid reliable honest camper and is ready to go with no with no nasty surprises! viewing is highly recommended. £10:000 ono for Eddie but please don't hurt his feelings ;). Please get in touch with any questions. Mileage: 54000 £10000, Midlands, Tel: 07837607678 uppo20@gmail.com

1965 Split Screen 13 Window Deluxe American Import

1965 Split Screen 13 Window Deluxe. Imported from Colorado USA. Reconditioned 1600 engine fitted 2 years ago. 6 months MOT. Great bus, good runner. Rock'n'roll bed. With much regret that I have to sell. Needs some much needed love on body work before the winter kicks in. Price: Realistic offers please, Southern England Tel: 07795093993, nic.nac@btinternet.com

VW 1972 Riveria/Westfalia Campervan

1972 Riviera/Westfalia interia Campmobile, LHD, new 1600 TP engine, this is a imported rust free van which is great original condition, it has had a recent spray job and lots of little snagging jobs, like, rear drive shafts, wheel bearings, brakes, battery, lights etc, drives very well and the family loves it. sleeps five, Paull 07725107234, paullio44@hotmail.com Mileage: 98,000, £11,500, Western England Tel: 07725107234, paullio44@hotmail.com

1964 VW Split Screen Camper

RHD. 1500 engine. 12v. Sidmouth conversion with original cooker, fridge and awning. owned since 1990, Restoration completed in 2013 (photos available from each stage), Price: £35,000, Southern England, Tel : 07973 213353, Email Address: pedhannan@gmail.com

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www.volksworld.com

Beautiful 1968 camper for sale

Stunning early bay, drives superbly, lots and lots of money spent... - MOT until July 2015 - custom interior; black, oak and purple matching detailed interior with purple curtains all around for privacy - windows are tinted for privacy - lowered with Fuchs reps porsche wheels - 1600 twin port engine with electronic ignition and leisure battery that charges as the engine runs - black leather vw customised bucket seats in the front - V.W. customised steering wheel - integrated lights throughout - very comfy pull out bed - wooden and black table that conveniently and easily folds away - deceptively spacious with storage units cleverly incorporated everywhere for life on the road - lovely soft grey brushed headlining - sink unit with tap with foot pump integrated into a unit that doubles up as a table/chopping board that pulls out - JVC radio/CD player and flip down flatscreen DVD in the back that hangs above the sofa/bed, great surround sound system - is tax exempt - recently had two new tyres fitted £13,995, Southern England, Tel: 01635 34155

1965 Volkswagen "Splitty" Camper

1965 RHD Splitscreen "splitty" camper Exterior; Completely stripped inside and out, repaired and painted. Underneath has been sealed, waxoiled and stone chipped for maximum protection. Painted in 3 stage Electric Orange pearlescent paint. Safari front and rear windows fitted along with pop out side windows. Early Ribbed bumpers have been modified and fitted. Polished Fuch wheels and tyres Interior; An award winning one off bespoke custom interior made from solid American Walnut featuring curved cupboards, storage a "rock and roll 3/4 bed", Weco fridge, 2 x gas hob and sink installed overhead wine rack (personal fav!) and a matching surfboard shaped free standing table. Reupholstered front and rear seats with 3 point seatbelts. Custom gauges (Oil Temp, pressure and rev counter) Brakes,suspension and steering; CSP Porsche pattern front disc brakes with dual circuit master cylinder Porsche pattern rear wheel hubs. Late bay rear shoes,cylinders, handbrake cables with stainless steel front and rear brake hoses. Creative engineering steering rack kit Creative engineering narrowed adjustable front beam. Tire rods, king and link pins Creative engineering dropped spindles Creative engineering IRS kit Engine and gearbox VW aircooled 1641cc with twin weber carbs, new fuel pump, alternator, distributor, fan and tinware (matched to paint) New 1303s gearbox fitted, Mileage: 1000, £14500, Eastern England, Tel: 01158882720, thereselbarnes@outlook.com

Type 2 Viking Deluxe

1979 2ltr RHD bay. Spacious Viking Deluxe conversion. Sleeps 6. Recent resto, new parts, bellows. Original interior and fabrics with contemporary covers. Original and modern awning. Thermo mats Good storage .tax/mot april2015 Mileage: 107,000, £11,000, Western England, Tel : 01326270596, lynn@lynngolden.co.uk

1976 VW T2 Campervan

1600cc Air-cooled, RHD, fully restored in 2012, sleeps 4, gas hob, fridge & leisure battery. Bellows were replaced this year. Comes with full drive away awning and cover. MOT June 2015, £16,5000 ono, Southern England, Tel : 07866 329194, vickiibutler1977@hotmail.co.uk

1989 VW T25 TRANSPORTER 211

2.1 T25 CAMPER HITOP GOOD GENERAL CONDITION GOOD ENGINE FULL MOT WHITE REAR KITCHEN WITH DIVIDER DOUBLE BED OR 2 SINGLES DOUBLE ROOF SLIDER BED NOT IN BUT EASILY REPLACED ZIG UNIT/ REAR SEATBELTS,WC/SINK FRIDGE COOKER/ GRILL FRONT SWIVEL SEAT 5 SPEED, Mileage: 110,000, £5995, Southern England, Tel : 07909914774, s500kym@hotmail.co.uk

1963 Split

1963 Cali import. Totally rust free, fresh paint and interior. Completely standard beautiful example of this classic. Photo restoration completed. Private seller, £25000, Southern England Tel: 07764 857129, pr_harvey@msn.com

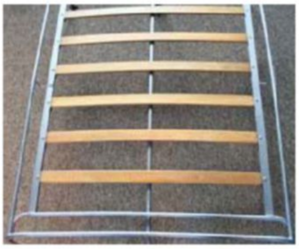
Parts

Vw barn door/splittie 1955-1962 15" x 4.50 steel wheels x 4

all hub cap springs in place & the other has 2 missing. Must be worth something to someone as not seen a set of these for a while. Make me a sensible offer? Northern England, Tel: 07943827197, djz6500@yahoo.co.uk

Vw Barn door 16" x 3.50 steel wheel 1949-1955

16" x 3.50 barn door steel wheel which can be used as is if you replace the tyre as it u/s or refurbish it. Getting rare/thin on the ground. Open to sensible offers? Northern England Tel: 07943827197, djz6500@yahoo.co.uk



Bekowa beetle roof rack

Vintage Bekowa beetle roof rack. Text or email for more photos.£300.00, Western England Tel: 07825291592, alimcd@tiscali.co.uk

T2 front panel (new)

T2 73-79 brand new complete front panel (includes windscreen frame and airbox) Purchased from Cool Air in 2011, never got round to using it. £600.00, London Tel: 07717303694, christopher.morton@hrp.org.uk

Okrasa

The very first Volkswagen tuner in the world was Gerhard Oettinger, and his name is still closely associated with VW today

Words
Richard Gunn

ACHTUNG
Dieses Auto ist mit einer OKRASA Hochleistungsanlage ausgestattet.
DIPL. ING. G. OETTINGER
OKRASA

Gerhard Oettinger, the original VW guru and father of Okrasa

It took a while for the world to recognise the potential of the Volkswagen, a car that in the immediate post-war years was dismissed by many as just a funny little vehicle with no real future. But fortunately, a few people did realise there was something a bit special about the Beetle. One of those was Gerhard Oettinger, who would go on to found Okrasa, the pioneer in tuning the type.

Oettinger, born in 1920, had his interest in cars started by the garage his father owned in Frankfurt. He later graduated with a degree in engine technology and, during World War II, served as a test engineer on Daimler-Benz-built aircraft. When hostilities finished, he did whatever he could to get by. So, as Volkswagens started to re-emerge from Wolfsburg, their piecemeal manufacture under British army control, he started tuning them at his father's garage. In 1946, he felt confident enough to formally establish his own company.

> “Porsche was also an early customer”

The Okrasa name was adopted in 1951, and despite sounding vaguely oriental, it's actually an acronym for *Oettinger Kraftfahrtechnische Spezial Anstalt*. Which, otherwise, would have been a bit of a mouthful.

Okrasa's expertise soon brought it to the attention of other firms specialising in making Volkswagens a little more exciting. Rometsch and Dannenhauer & Stauss both used Okrasa-tweaked engines in their coachbuilt sports models. Porsche was also an early customer, fitting the firm's twin carburettor set up in early 356s as a means of making their tiny 1086cc engines a little bit more raucous than the Beetle units they were based on. Attention was soon aroused over the other side of the Atlantic too, after a TWA pilot took a kit back to the USA and, after testing it, sent the impressive results off to various magazines. As sales of Volkswagens began to substantially grow in America, so the flow of Okrasa parts going Stateside began to multiply greatly. By 1956, EMPI was selling them, advertising an ambitious cut in the 0-60mph time of a standard Beetle of 12 seconds. And, apparently, with “no sign of overheating reported, even in the desert.”

The two main kits were the TS-1200, which included high compression, twin-port cylinder heads, and the more potent TSV-1300/30 with dual Solex carburettors as used on Porsches, all the required pipes and linkages and a longer stroke crankshaft that raised engine capacity to 1295cc. It's notable that it took Volkswagen itself until 1965 to get around to doing similar. For those wanting even more, a Fram oil filter and Okrasa's own design of oil cooler could be added. There was also a natty little Okrasa script badge available to let everybody know you had a little extra under your engine lid, along with a more severe-looking red plaque that shouted ‘*Achtung*’ at you and warned any tinkers that your Volkswagen was fitted with parts from Dipl. Ing. G. Oettinger. And who would want to mess with that?

Okrasa grew to be regarded as the premier tuning firm for Beetles and their brethren, Bus kits appearing as well in the early 1960s. By 1963, not even the insular Volkswagen itself could ignore things, and entered into a close cooperation with Okrasa. Not that it was all peace and harmony mind. When the Belgian importer, D'Ieteren, planned 300 ‘Mach 1’ Beetles with Okrasa engines in autumn 1964, Volkswagen boss, Heinz Nordhoff, threw his toys out of the pram at its press release suggesting ‘real’ Beetles were now being built in Brussels. Production was therefore halted after just 29 of these special editions appeared. But by 1974, customers in Germany could order new ‘Oettinger Beetles’ from dealers with officially approved Okrasa tweaks. However, air-cooled VW production in Europe was now in its final years, and the astute tuner was evolving into modifying the new water-cooled range as well – something it continues to do for the entire VAG range today.

As for Oettinger himself, he died in 1997 at the age of 77, having built up an engineering empire out of his early tinkerings with the business ends of Beetles. One year after his death, the company changed its name to Oettinger Technik GmbH. ■

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